



Burgundy

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Best Places to Stay

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Why Go?

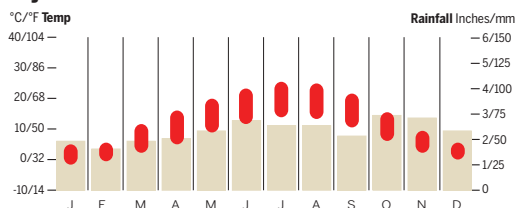
Burgundy (Bourgogne in French) offers some of France's most gorgeous countryside: rolling green hills dotted with medieval villages, and mustard fields blooming in bright contrast. Two great French passions, wine and food, come together here in a particularly rich and enticing form.

The region's towns and its dashing handsome capital, Dijon, are heirs to a glorious architectural heritage that goes back to the Renaissance, the Middle Ages and beyond, into the mists of Gallo-Roman and Celtic antiquity.

Burgundy is also a paradise for lovers of the great outdoors. You can hike and cycle through the vineyards of the Côte d'Or, on a network of cycling trails, and in the wild reaches of the Parc Naturel Régional du Morvan (Morvan Regional Park); glide along the waterways of the Yonne in a canal boat; or float above the vineyards in a hot-air balloon.

When to Go

Dijon



May Mustard blooms in the fields as the vineyards (and the vintners) revive after winter.

July Splendid weather makes summer a perfect time to cycle Burgundy's bike trails.

November Beaune's Trois Glorieuses Festival brims with wine, music and merriment.

Top Wine Regions

Burgundy's red wines and especially those of the Côte d'Or vineyards around Beaune are world-famous. The cellars under the city of Beaune alone comprise millions of bottles of some of the best wines in existence. But don't forget to leave room in your itinerary for a few of the other more laid-back appellations. Charming Irancy is a favourite tasting region for many locals. Chablis, with its unpretentious, crisp white wines, is wonderful on a hot summer day. To really get off the beaten path, head to the Mâconnais and Châtillonnais vineyards.

COOKING COURSES

Burgundy's rich, hearty cuisine combines smoky flavours and fresh ingredients. Why not take the opportunity to learn a few of the local techniques? Courses range from the informal to the chic:

Use the refurbished 17th-century kitchen at Château d'Ancy-le-Franc (p418) to learn from Judicæel Ruch of Plaza Athénée in Paris. Classes (€120, once per month, April to November) follow themes like foie gras or *macarons* and include wine with the completed meal.

Le Charlemagne (p404), in the heart of Côte d'Or wine country, has 1½-hour classes (€70) each Saturday, featuring a fresh, seasonal ingredient and accompanied by a wine tasting and dessert.

The proprietress of La Cimentelle (p421), Nathalie, will teach you how to make a *repas gastronomique* in a half-day course (€80) – fun to do with a group of friends.

L'Espérance (p425), Marc Meneau's fabulous restaurant near Vézelay offers two-day cookery classes that include dinner and accommodation at the inn.

WINE TOURS

Although Burgundy is covered in vineyards, not many areas offer organised tours of the wineries. The best hubs for picking up a tour are Dijon, Beaune and Chablis.

Book Ahead

» Wine courses are available at École des Vins de Bourgogne (p419) – plan for anything from three hours to three days.

Burgundy Reading

- » *La Maison de Claudine* by Colette (see p415)
- » *Jean-Christophe* by Romain Rolland (see p424)
- » *The Wines of Burgundy* by Sylvain Pitiot and Jean-Charles Servant
- » *Wine and War* by Don and Petie Kladstrup

Resources

- » Biking Burgundy: www.burgundy-by-bike.com
- » Train and bus options: www.mobigo-bourgogne.com
- » Wines of Burgundy: www.bourgogne-wines.com
- » Music and events: www.magma-magazine.fr, in French

The Celts in Burgundy

» Bibracte (p425), the ruins of the capital city of the Aedui people, puts the Celts centre stage at the excellent Museum of Celtic Civilisation. Vercingétorix was proclaimed the chief of the Gauls here before being defeated by Julius Caesar at Alésia, the capital of the Mandubii people.

» Trésor de Vix, a stunning collection of Celtic, Greek and Etruscan objects, is the focus of the Musée du Pays Châtillonnais in Châtillon-sur-Seine (p410).

» The Celtic goddess Sequana is one of the highlights of Dijon's Musée Archéologique (p397): the only existing image of her is this 1st-century-AD bronze depicting her astride a boat.

» Sacred springs and sanctuaries include Fontaines Salées (p425), Fosse Dionne (p417) and Source de la Douix (p411).

History

At its height during the 14th and 15th centuries, the duchy of Burgundy was one of the richest and most powerful states in Europe and encompassed a vast swathe of territory stretching from modern-day Burgundy to Alsace and northwest to Lorraine, Luxembourg, Flanders and Holland. This was a time of bitter rivalry between Burgundy and France; indeed, it was the Burgundians who sold Jeanne d'Arc (Joan of Arc) to the English, and for a while it seemed quite possible that the kingdom of France would be taken over by Burgundy. In the end, though, it worked out the other way around, and in 1477 Burgundy became French.

During the Middle Ages two Burgundy-based monastic orders exerted significant influence across much of Christendom. The ascetic Cistercians were headquartered at Cîteaux, while their bitter rivals, the powerful and worldly Benedictines, were based at Cluny.

Getting There & Around

By car or rail (including the TGV Sud-Est), Burgundy makes an easy stopover on the way from the English Channel or Paris to the Alps or southern France. See p394 for cycling and walking options.

CAR From Dijon, autoroutes stretch northeast to Alsace (A36), north to Lorraine (A31), north and then west to Champagne (A31, A5 and A26) and south to the Rhône Valley (A6).

BUS & TRAIN The towns and some of the villages mentioned in this chapter are served by trains and buses in high season, though patience and planning are a must as services in many areas are infrequent (especially on Sunday and during school holidays) or have to be booked the day before.

Mobigo (☎08 00 10 20 04; www.mobigo-bourgogne.com) Details of buses and trains around Burgundy.

CÔTE-D'OR

The Côte-d'Or *département* is named after one of the world's foremost winegrowing regions, which stretches from Dijon, bursting with cultural riches, south to the wine town of Beaune and beyond. In the far northwest of the *département*, on the border with Champagne, Châtillon-sur-Seine displays Celtic treasures; in the west you can explore the walled, hilltop town of Semur-en-Auxois.

Dijon

POP 250,000

Dijon is one of France's most appealing cities. Filled with elegant medieval and Renaissance buildings, the lively centre is wonderful for strolling, especially if you like to leaven your cultural enrichment with excellent food, fine wine and shopping.

Dijon wears its long and glorious history with grace, and with a self-confidence that's never smug or off-putting because it's so obviously and richly deserved. The city's 25,000 students keep the nightlife snappy, though people of all ages participate in the city's thriving cultural life.

History

Dijon served as the capital of the duchy of Burgundy from the 11th to 15th centuries, enjoying a golden age during the 14th and 15th centuries under Philippe-le-Hardi (Philip the Bold), Jean-sans-Peur (John the Fearless) and Philippe-le-Bon (Philip the Good). During their reigns, some of the finest painters, sculptors and architects from around the continent were brought to Dijon, turning the city into one of the great centres of European art.

Sights

The Owl's Trail (€2.50), available in 11 languages at the tourist office, details a self-guided city-centre walking tour; the route is marked on the pavement with bronze triangles. All of Dijon's municipal museums are free except, occasionally, for special exhibitions. Major churches are open from 8am to 7pm.

Palais des Ducs et des États de Bourgogne

PALACE

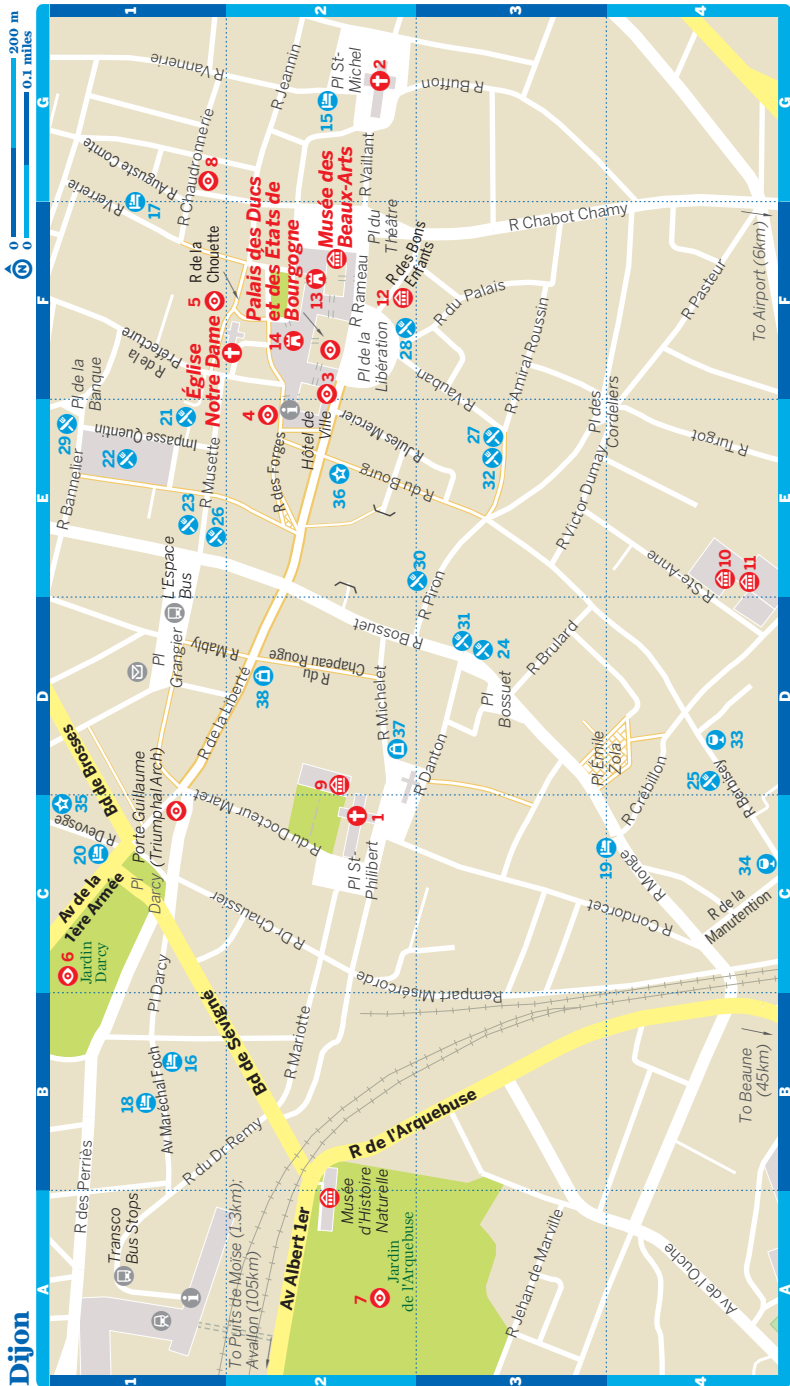
(Palace of the Dukes and States of Burgundy) Once home to Burgundy's powerful dukes, this monumental palace is the focal point of old Dijon. Given a neoclassical facade in the 17th and 18th centuries while serving as the seat of the States-General (Parliament) of Burgundy, it overlooks **place de la Libération**, a magnificent semicircular public square designed by Jules Hardouin-Mansart (one of the architects of Versailles) in 1686.

The western wing is occupied by Dijon's **Hôtel de Ville** (City Hall). Inside the arch that's across the street from 92 rue de la Liberté is **Escalier Gabriel** (1730s), a grand marble stairway with gilded railings that's named after its architect.



Burgundy Highlights

- 1 Sample Burgundy's most renowned vintages in **Beaune** (p405) and along the vine-carpeted slopes of the **Côte d'Or** (p403)
- 2 Marvel at the glories of the late Middle Ages at Dijon's **Musée des Beaux-Arts** (p396) and Beaune's **Hôtel-Dieu** (p405)
- 3 Explore the quirky village of **Noyers-sur-Serein** (p418) and stroll into the surrounding countryside
- 4 Conjure up monastic life in the Middle Ages at the abbeys of **Cluny** (p428), **Fontenay** (p410), **Pontigny** (p417), **Cîteaux** (p401) and **Vézelay** (p423)
- 5 Drop back into the early days of humankind at the ancient Celtic ruins of **Bibracte** (p425) atop Mont Beuvray
- 6 Watch a château being built with 13th-century technology at the **Chantier Médiéval de Guédelon** (p415)



The eastern wing houses the outstanding **Musée des Beaux-Arts**, whose entrance is next to the **Tour de Bar**, a squat 14th-century tower that once served as a prison.

Just off the **Cour d'Honneur**, the 46m-high, mid-15th-century **Tour Philippe le Bon** (Tower of Philip the Good; ☎03 80 74 52 71; adult/child €2.30/free; ♿accompanied climbs every 45min 9am-noon & 1.45-5.30pm Wed-Sun, closed Thu-Fri late Nov-Easter) affords fantastic views over the city. On a clear day you can see all the way to Mont Blanc.



Musée des Beaux-Arts

ART MUSEUM

(☎03 80 74 52 09; audioguide €4, tours adult/child €6/3; ♿9.30am-6pm Wed-Mon) Housed in the eastern wing of the Palais des Ducs, these sprawling galleries make up one of the most outstanding museums in France. The rooms themselves are works of art and a special chance to be inside this monumental building.

The star is the wood-panelled **Salle des Gardes** (Guards' Room), once warmed by a gargantuan Gothic fireplace. It houses the

ornate, carved late-medieval sepulchres of dukes John the Fearless and Philip the Bold (by Jean de Marville, Claus Sluter and Claus de Werve), as well as three impossibly intricate gilded Gothic retables from the 1300s. Rogier Van der Weyden's portrait of Philip the Good hangs here as well.

The modern and contemporary art section, with works by Manet and Monet and sculptures by Matisse and Rodin, harbours a particular delight: the **Pompon Room**. Tucked off a back staircase, this room is packed with stylized modern sculptures of animals by François Pompon (1855-1933). Born in Saulieu, Burgundy, Pompon was an assistant to Auguste Rodin; but his own sculptures including the famous *L'Ours Blanc* (White Bear, 1920) and a fantastic orang-utan in black marble, beautifully capture his unique vision of wildlife. Note that the modern and contemporary art galleries close daily from 11.30am to 1.45pm. Schedule your visit accordingly if you want to be sure to see pieces by Rodin, Rouault, Manet and Matisse.

Dijon

📍 Top Sights

Église Notre Dame	F2
Musée des Beaux-Arts	F2
Palais des Ducs et des États de Bourgogne	F2

📍 Sights

1 Cathédrale St-Bénigne	C2
2 Église St-Michel	G2
3 Escalier Gabriel	F2
Hôtel Aubriot	(see 4)
4 Hôtel Chambellan	E2
5 Hôtel de Vogüé	F1
6 Jardin Darcy	C1
7 Jardin de l'Arquebuse	A2
8 Maison des Cariatides	G1
Maison Maillard	(see 4)
Maison Millière	(see 5)
9 Musée Archéologique	D2
10 Musée d'Art Sacré	E4
11 Musée de la Vie Bourguignonne	E4
12 Musée Magnin	F2
13 Tour de Bar	F2
14 Tour Philippe le Bon	F2

🏠 Sleeping

15 Hôtel Chambellan	G2
16 Hôtel Chateaubriand	B1
17 Hôtel Le Jacquemart	F1

18 Hôtel Le Jura	B1
19 Hôtel Le Sauvage	C4
20 Hôtel Sofitel La Cloche	C1

🍷 Eating

21 Café Chez Nous	E1
22 Covered Market	E1
23 Fromagerie	E1
24 La Dame d'Aquitaine	D3
25 La Mère Folle	D4
26 La Petite Marché	E1
27 Le Petit Roi de la Lune	E3
28 Le Pré aux Clercs	F2
29 Marché Plus Supermarket	E1
30 Monoprix Supermarket	E3
31 Mulot & Petitjean	D3
32 Osteria Enoteca Italiana	E3

🍷 Drinking

33 Café de l'Univers	D4
34 Le Cappuccino	C4

🎬 Entertainment

35 Cinéma Devosge	C1
36 Fnac Billeterie	E2

🛍 Shopping

37 Institut Géographique National	D2
38 Moutarde Maille	D2

Other highlights include a fine collection of **primitives** that give you a good sense of how artistic and aesthetic sensibilities varied between Italy, Switzerland and the Rhineland in the 13th and 14th centuries; a smattering of old masters such as Lorenzo Lotto; and quite a few naturalistic **sculptures** by the Dijon-born artist François Rude (1784–1855).

In the courtyard, the **ducal kitchens** (1433) often host exhibitions of works by local artists.

Église Notre Dame

CHURCH

A block north of the Palais des Ducs, Église Notre Dame was built between 1220 and 1240. The extraordinary facade's three tiers are lined with leering gargoyles separated by two rows of pencil-thin columns. The interior has a vast transept and 13th-century stained glass. High atop the church, the 14th-century **Horloge à Jacquemart** (Jacquemart Clock) was transported from Flanders in 1383 by Philip the Bold, who claimed it as a trophy of war. It chimes every quarter-hour.

Hôtels Particuliers

HISTORIC MANSIONS

Many of Dijon's finest houses lie north of the Palais des Ducs on and around rue Verrerie, rue Vannerie and rue des Forges, whose names reflect the industries that once thrived there (glassmaking, basket-weaving and metalsmithery, respectively). The early-17th-century **Maison des Cariatides** (28 rue Chaudronnerie), its facade a riot of stone caryatids, soldiers and vines, is particularly fine. A bit to the west you'll find the 13th-century **Hôtel Aubriot** (40 rue des Forges) and the Renaissance-style **Maison Maillard** (38 rue des Forges), all garlands and lions. Go inside the truly splendid 17th-century **Hôtel Chambellan** (34 rue des Forges; admission free), from whose courtyard a spiral stone staircase leads up to remarkable vaulting.

Behind Église Notre Dame, the 17th-century **Hôtel de Vogüé** (8 rue de la Chouette) is renowned for the ornate carvings around its exquisitely proportioned Renaissance courtyard. It's worth walking through the pink stone archway for a peek. Figures of an owl and a cat perch high atop the roof of the 15th-century **Maison Mil-lière** (10 rue de la Chouette), which was a setting in the 1990 film *Cyrano de Bergerac* with Gérard Depardieu.

Cathédrale St-Bénigne

CATHEDRAL

(place St-Philibert) Situated above the tomb of St Benignus (who is believed to have brought Christianity to Burgundy in the 2nd century), this Gothic-style church with multicoloured roof tiles was built around 1300 as an abbey church. Some of Burgundy's great figures are buried here. The **crypt** (admission €2; ☎9.30am–6pm Mon–Fri, to 4pm Sat, 2–6pm Sun) is all that remains of an 11th-century Romanesque basilica and is a maze of arched tunnels, carved capitals and inlaid floors. Guided tours are available.

Musée Magnin

ART MUSEUM

(☎03 80 67 11 10; 4 rue des Bon Enfants; adult/child incl audioguide € 3.50/2.50; ☎10am–noon & 2–6pm Tue–Sun) Jeanne and Maurice Magnin turned their historic town house over to the state to display their excellent art collection in perpetuity. Works include fine examples of the Italian Renaissance and Flemish and medieval painting.

FREE Musée Archéologique

ARCHAEOLOGY MUSEUM

(☎03 80 30 88 54; 5 rue du Docteur Maret; ☎9am–12.30pm & 1.30–6pm Wed–Mon, closed Mon Sep–mid-May) Truly surprising Celtic, Roman and Merovingian artefacts are displayed here, including a particularly fine 1st-century-AD bronze of the Celtic goddess Sequana standing on a dual-prowed boat. Upstairs, the early Gothic hall (12th and 13th centuries), with its ogival arches held aloft by two rows of columns, once served as the dormitory of a Benedictine abbey.

FREE Musée de la Vie Bourguignonne

CULTURAL MUSEUM

(☎03 80 48 80 90; 17 rue Ste-Anne; ☎9am–noon & 2–6pm Wed–Mon) Housed in a 17th-century Cistercian convent, this museum explores village and town life in Burgundy in centuries past with evocative tableaux illustrating dress and traditional crafts. Down the alley to the right as you exit the cloister, the **Musée d'Art Sacré** (15 rue Ste-Anne) displays gleaming Catholic ritual objects from the 12th to 19th centuries inside the convent's copper-domed chapel (1709).

Église St-Michel

CHURCH

(place St-Michel) Originally Gothic, this church subsequently underwent a facade-lift operation in which it was given a richly ornamented Renaissance west front. Its two 17th-century towers are topped with cupolas and, higher still, glittering gold spheres.

ON THE GROUND, UPON THE WATER & IN THE AIR

Tasting fine wines often involves hanging out in dimly lit cellars, but Burgundy is also a paradise for lovers of the great outdoors.

The **Comité Régional de Tourisme de Bourgogne** (Burgundy Regional Tourist Board; www.burgundy-tourism.com) publishes excellent brochures on outdoors options, including *Burgundy by Bike* and *Boating Holidays in Burgundy*, available at tourist offices.

Hiking & Cycling

Burgundy has thousands of kilometres of walking and cycling trails, including sections of the GR2, GR7 and GR76. Varied local trails take you through some of the most ravishingly beautiful winegrowing areas in France, among them the vineyards of world-renowned Côte d'Or, Chablis and the Mâconnais (in Saône-et-Loire).

Rural footpaths criss-cross the Parc Naturel Régional du Morvan and some depart from the Morvan Visitors Centre, but you can also pick up trails from the Abbaye de Fontenay, Autun, Avallon, Cluny, Noyers-sur-Serein and Vézelay.

You can cycle on or very near the *chemin de halage* (towpath) of the Canal de Bourgogne all the way from Dijon to Migennes (225km). The section from Montbard to Tonnerre (65km) passes by Château d'Ancy-le-Franc; between Montbard and Pouilly-en-Auxois (58km) spurs go to the Abbaye de Fontenay and Semur-en-Auxois.

For details on Burgundy's planned 800km of *véloroutes* (bike paths) and *voies vertes* (green ways), including maps and guides, see www.burgundy-by-bike.com or stop at a tourist office.

Canal & River Boating

Few modes of transport are as relaxing as a houseboat (p975) on Burgundy's 1200km of placid waterways, which include the Rivers Yonne, Saône and Seille and a network of canals, including the Canal de Bourgogne, the Canal du Centre, the Canal du Nivernais and the Canal Latéral à la Loire. Reliable rental companies offering boats from late March to 11 November (canals close for repairs in winter, but rivers don't):

Bateaux de Bourgogne (☎03 86 72 92 10; www.tourisme-yonne.com; 1-2 quai de la République, Auxerre) Reservations centre for four large companies offering 15 points of departure; upstairs from Auxerre's tourist office.

France Afloat (Burgundy Cruisers; ☎03 86 81 67 87, in UK 08700 110 538; www.franceafloat.com; 1 quai du Port, Vermenton) Based 23km southeast of Auxerre.

Locaboat Holidays (☎03 86 91 72 72; www.locaboat.com; Port au Bois, Joigny) Rents boats throughout France, including at Joigny (27km northwest of Auxerre).

Hot-Air Ballooning

From about April to October you can take a stunning *montgolfière* (hot-air balloon) ride over Burgundy for around €229 per adult. Book through the Beaune and Dijon tourist offices. Some veteran outfits:

Air Adventures (☎06 08 27 95 39; www.airadventures.fr) Based just outside Pouilly-en-Auxois, 50km west of Dijon.

Air Escargot (☎03 85 87 12 30; www.air-escargot.com) In Remigny, 16km south of Beaune.

Puits de Moïse

MEDIEVAL SCULPTURE

(Well of Moses; Centre Hospitalier Spécialisé, 1 bd Chanoine Kir; admission €3.50; ☉9am-12.30pm & 1.30-6pm) This famous grouping of six Old Testament figures, carved from 1395 to 1405 by court sculptor Claus Sluter and his nephew Claus de Werve, has been open to individual visitors since summer 2010, or

can be seen on a guided tour with the tourist office. It is on the grounds of a psychiatric hospital 1.2km west of the train station; by bus take Line 3 toward Fontaine d'Ouche.

Parks & Gardens

GARDENS

Dijon has plenty of green spaces that are perfect for picnics, including **Jardin**

Darcy and **Jardin de l'Arquebuse**, the botanic gardens, with a stream and pond.

Tours

The tourist office has scads of information on tours of the city and the nearby wine regions, and can make bookings.

MP3 Tour

WALKING TOURS

(€6, incl MP3 player with images €12) From the main tourist office.

Walking Tours

HISTORY TOUR

(adult/child €6/3) A slew of different tours depart from the main tourist office. Times vary throughout the year.

Segway Tour

HISTORY TOUR

(adult/child €16/7; ⌚ 2.30pm & 4pm Mon-Sat) Run by the tourist office, this 1½-hour tour zips around the city centre.

Vineyard Tours

WINE TOURS

Minibus tours in English introduce the Côte d'Or vineyards. Reserve by phone, internet or via the tourist office. Operators include: **Alter & Go** (☎ 06 23 37 92 04; www.alterandgo.fr; tours €60-80) with an emphasis on history and winemaking methods, **Authentica Tour** (☎ 06 87 01 43 78; www.authentica-tour.com; tours €55-95) and **Wine & Voyages** (☎ 03 80 61 15 15; www.wineandvoyages.com; 2/3hr tours €48/58).

Sleeping

Hôtel Le Jacquemart

HOTEL €

(☎ 03 80 60 09 60; www.hotel-lejacquemart.fr; 32 rue Verrière; d €49-65; @☎) Right in the heart of old Dijon, this basic hotel has 31 tidy, comfortable rooms; the pricier ones

are quite spacious and some come with marble fireplaces. Window boxes make the 18th-century building especially pretty in summer.

Hôtel Le Sauvage

HOTEL €

(Hostellerie du Sauvage; ☎ 03 80 41 31 21; www.hotelesauvage.com, in French; 64 rue Monge; s €46-55, d €51-61, tr €80; @☎) In a 15th-century *relais de poste* (mail staging post) set around a cobbled, vine-shaded courtyard, this good-value budget hotel is just off lively rue Monge. Some rooms are sparse, others are furnished with antiques. Parking €5.

Hôtel Le Jura

HOTEL €€

(☎ 03 80 41 61 12; www.oceaniahotels.com; 14 av Maréchal Foch; d €70-92, q €179; @☎) Near the train station, this straightforward hotel has friendly staff and some rooms overlooking a central courtyard. The 'superior' rooms are really that, with marble bathrooms and a sense of luxury. Room prices fluctuate; check online. Parking €9.50.

Hôtel Sofitel La Cloche

HOTEL €€€

(☎ 03 80 30 12 32; www.hotel-lacloche.com; 14 place Darcy; d €190-240, ste €300-800; @☎) This venerable hostelry, built in 1884, boasts a huge lobby chandelier, an immaculate back garden, a sauna and a small fitness room. Hushed, comfortable rooms mix shiny brass, sleek wood furniture and crisp linen.

Hôtel Chambellan

HOTEL €

(☎ 03 80 67 12 67; www.hotel-chambellan.com; 92 rue Vannerie; s/d from €45/50; @☎) Built in 1730, and smack in the middle of the old town, this place has a vaguely medieval feel. Most of the rooms, decorated in cheerful tones of red, orange, pink and white, have views of a quiet courtyard.

Ethic Étapes Dijon

HOSTEL €

(Centre De Recontres et de Séjour Internationales, CRISD; ☎ 03 80 72 95 20; www.cri-dijon.com; 1 av Champollion, Palais de Sports; dm/s/d incl breakfast €21/39/52; @☎) This institutional (though friendly) 219-bed hostel, 2.5km northeast of the centre, was completely renovated in 2006. Most beds are in modern, airy rooms for two. By bus, take Line 4 to the Epirey CRI stop. Disabled accessible. Parking free.

Hôtel Chateaubriand

HOTEL €

(☎ 03 80 41 42 18; www.hotelchateaubriand.fr, in French; 3 av Maréchal Foch; d €45, with washbasin only €37) An old-fashioned cheapie,

DON'T MISS

THE LUCKY OWL

Around the north side of Notre Dame, rue de la Chouette is named after the small stone *chouette* (owl) carved into the exterior corner of the chapel diagonally across from No 24. Said to grant happiness and wisdom to those who stroke it, it has been worn smooth by generations of fortune-seekers. All sorts of superstitions surround the owl: some insist that walking by the dragon in the lower left corner of the grille of the adjacent window will annul your wish, while others insist that approaching the dragon will actually help make your wish come true.

with the air of a well-worn dive but, thanks to the Victorian breakfast room, a bit of character.



Eating

Find loads of restaurants on buzzy rue Berbisey, around place Émile Zola, on rue Amiral Roussin and around the perimeter of the covered market. In warm months, outdoor cafés fill place de la Libération.

Le Pré aux Clercs GASTRONOMIC FRENCH €€€

(☎03 80 38 05 05; www.jeanpierrebilloux.com; 13 place de la Libération; lunch menus €35, dinner menus €50-95; ☺lunch Tue-Sun, dinner Tue-Sat) From the luscious lunch menu (which includes a glass of wine) to the nine-course *dégustation* menu, every detail is cared for at this top-notch restaurant looking out onto the Palais des Ducs. Diners stare in wonderment at concoctions like *flan de foie gras* with pear coulis or an 'opera' of truffles. Save room for the chocolate fondant.

Osteria Enoteca Italiana ITALIAN €€

(☎03 80 50 07 36; 32 rue Amiral Roussin; lunch menus €12.50-16, dinner menus €25-36; ☺lunch Tue-Sun, dinner Tue-Sat; 🍷) A lively Italian *ristorante* that's proud of its authentic, heaping plates of pasta (including vegetarian fettuccine), meat and fish dishes, and its scrumptious homemade desserts (think tiramisu). The decor hints at Venice, the chef's hometown, and the wine list is Italian (glass €3.50).

Café Chez Nous CAFÉ €

(☎03 80 50 12 98; impasse Quentin; lunch menus €8; ☺lunch noon-2pm Tue-Sun, bar 10am-2am, 11am-2pm Sun, closed Mon) This quintessentially French *bar du coin* (neighbourhood bar), often crowded, hides down a tiny alleyway near the covered market. Lunches are generally made with organic ingredients. Wine by the glass is a bargain (€1.20 to €2.40). Check the chalkboard for occasional dinners and live music.

La Dame d'Aquitaine BURGUNDIAN €€

(☎03 80 30 45 65; 23 place Bossuet; lunch menus €21, dinner menus €28-43; ☺lunch Tue-Sat, dinner Mon-Sat, closed lunch mid-July-mid-Aug) Excellent Burgundian and southwestern French cuisine is served under the sumptuously lit bays of a 13th-century *cave*. Options include *coq au vin rouge* and *magret de canard aux baies de cassis* (duck's breast with blackcurrant sauce). Classical music filters through the elegant room and the wine list is extensive.

Le Petit Roi de la Lune

BISTRO €€

(☎03 80 49 89 93; 28 rue Amiral Roussin; lunch menu €10, mains €15-18; ☺lunch Tue-Sat, dinner Mon-Sat) A hip, younger crowd comes for French cuisine that, explains the chef, has been *revisité, réarrangée et décalée* (revisited, rearranged and shifted). The hugely popular *Camembert frit avec gelée de mûre* (Camembert wrapped in breadcrumbs, fried, and then served with blackberry jelly) tops the list.

La Mère Folle

BURGUNDIAN €€

(☎03 80 50 19 76; 102 rue Berbisey; lunch menus €10, dinner menus €15-23; ☺Tue-Sat) Look past the over-the-top medieval decor and you'll find Burgundian specialties such as *magret de canard au miel*, *thym et mirabelles* (fillet of duck with honey, thyme and cherry plums). Weekday lunches are a steal and include terrine straight from the crock.

La Petite Marché

ORGANIC €

(☎03 80 30 15 10; 27-29 rue Musette; lunch menus €10-14; ☺lunch Mon-Sat; 🍷🌱) This organic restaurant serves seven types of salad and quite a few vegetarian options (as well as meat and fish); a good choice if you're tired of heavy Burgundian classics. Upstairs from an organic food shop, it also sells organic wines by the glass (€1.50).

Self-Catering

Covered Market

FOOD MARKET €

(Halles du Marché; rue Quentin; ☺7am-1pm Tue & Thu-Sat) A huge market on Friday and Saturday, with a smaller version on Tuesday and Thursday.

Fromagerie

CHEESE €

(28 rue Musette; ☺2.30-7pm Mon, 7am-12.30pm & 2.30-7pm Tue-Sat) Friendly, top-quality cheese shop.

Mulot & Petitjean

BAKERY €

(13 place Bossuet; ☺2-5pm Mon, 9am-noon & 2-5pm Tue-Sat) Traditional *pain d'épices* (spice bread).

Marché Plus

SUPERMARKET €

(2 rue Bannelier; ☺7am-9pm Mon-Sat, 9am-1pm Sun)

Monoprix

SUPERMARKET €

(11-13 rue Piron; ☺9am-9.30pm Mon-Sat)



Drinking

Bars line rue Berbisey.

O Kil

BAR

(☎03 80 30 02 48; www.lekil.com, in French; 1 rue Auguste Perdreux) Under stone cellar vaulting,

this cosy pub hosts live music once a month. Fans of English and other languages gather to converse at their 'Café Polyglotte' at 7.30pm on Wednesday.

Le Cappuccino

BAR

(☎03 80 41 06 35; 132 rue Berbisey) Coffee isn't even served at this often-packed bar, but wine by the glass and 80 beers are, including Mandubienne, the only beer brewed in Dijon. Occasionally hosts live music.

Café de l'Univers

BAR

(☎03 80 30 98 29; 47 rue Berbisey) This ground-floor bar, with walls covered in mirrors and beer ads, has its menu on a chalkboard. In the cellar there's live music from 9pm to 1am on Friday and Saturday. Popular with students but ages are varied.



Entertainment

For the latest on Dijon's and the region's cultural scene, pick up the monthly *Spectacles* (www.spectacles-publications.com, in French) or *Magma* (www.magma-magazine.fr, in French) available free from the tourist office. Event tickets are sold at the **Fnac billetterie** (☎08 92 68 36 22; www.fnacspectacles.com, in French; 24 rue du Bourg; ☎10am-7pm Mon-Sat). Dip into classical music and drama at **Opera Dijon** (☎03 80 48 82 82; www.opera-dijon.fr) and **Théâtre Mansart** (☎03 80 63 00 00; www.theatre-mansart.com; 94 bd Mansart). Check the Opera website for venues; Théâtre Mansart is located 4km southwest of the Palais des Ducs.

Find nightclubs near the northwest corner of place de la République (eg rue Marceau), 1km north of the Palais des Ducs.

Places listed under Drinking host live music.

Le Cercle Rhumerie Jamaïque

MUSIC CLUB

(☎03 80 73 52 19; www.lecerclejamaïque.com, in French; 14 place de la République; admission free; ☎Tue-Sat) Decked out like a bordello, with bold-red walls and gilded mirrors, this club has live music (Cuban, jazz, rock 'n' roll) nightly from 11pm to 3am. The downstairs disco has a blue galactic ceiling and music that's as mixed as the clients' ages (mostly 20 to 40). Located 1km north of the Palais des Ducs.

Cinéma Eldorado

CINEMA

(☎03 80 66 51 89; recorded information 08 92 68 01 74; www.cinema-eldorado.fr, in French; 21 rue Alfred de Musset) Art-house cinema, 2km southeast of Palais des Ducs.

Cinéma Devosge

CINEMA

(☎03 80 30 74 79; recorded information 08 92 68 73 33; http://cinealpes.allocine.net, in French; 6 rue Devosge) Nondubbed films.



Shopping

The main shopping area is around rue de la Liberté and perpendicular rue du Bourg.

Moutarde Maille

MUSTARD

(☎03 80 30 41 02; 32 rue de la Liberté; ☎10am-7pm Mon-Sat) When you enter the factory boutique of this mustard company, tangy odours assault your nostrils. Thirty-six kinds of mustard, like cassis or truffle and celery, include three on tap that you can sample (from €2.40 per 200ml).

Institut Géographique National

MAPS

(IGN; ☎03 80 49 98 58; 2 rue Michelet) Unsurpassed selection of driving, walking and cycling maps.



Information

Centre Hospitalier Universitaire

(☎03 80 29 30 31; 3 rue du Faubourg Raines; ☎24hr) Hospital with 24-hour emergency room/casualty ward.

Cyberbisey (☎03 80 30 95 41; 53 rue Berbisey; per hr €3; ☎10am-8pm Mon-Fri, noon-8pm Sat) Internet access.

Cyberspace 21 (☎03 80 30 57 43; 46 rue Monge; per hr €4; ☎11am-midnight Mon-Sat, 2pm-midnight Sun) Internet access.

Main post office (place Grangier) Exchanges foreign currency.

Multi-Rezo UnderCity (☎03 80 42 13 89; 55 rue Guillaume Tell; per hr €4; ☎9am-2am Mon-Fri, 11am-2am Sat, 2pm-midnight Sun) Internet access.

Police station (☎03 80 44 55 00; 2 place Suquet; ☎24hr) Access on rue du Petit Cîteaux nights, Sundays and holidays.

SOS Médecins (☎03 80 59 80 80) Doctors on call 24 hours.

Tourist office (☎08 92 70 05 58; www.visitdijon.com; ☎9am-6.30pm Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm Sun) main office (11 rue des Forges); station annexe (train station) The one- to three-day Dijon Côte de Nuits Pass may save you some cash.



Getting There & Away

AIR At the time of research, no international flights used **Dijon-Bourgogne Airport** (☎03 80 67 67 67; www.dijon.aeroport.fr).

A single train station **ticket counter** (☎5.45am-9pm) deals with TER trains, Divia local buses and the *départementale* bus company, Transco.

BUS Transco (☎08 00 10 20 04; www.mobigo-bourgogne.com) Buses stop in front of the train station. Free *Guide Horaire* booklet (at the ticket counter) has schedules. Tickets sold on board (€1.50). Bus 60 links Dijon with the northern Côte de Nuits wine villages of Marsannay-la-Côte, Couchey, Fixin and Gevrey-Chambertin (30 minutes). Bus 44 goes to Nuits-St-Georges and Beaune. Bus 43 goes to Abbaye de Cîteaux.

Eurolines (☎03 80 68 20 44; 53 rue Guillaume Tell; ☎Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat) International bus travel.

CAR Avis, Hertz, National-Citer and Europcar have desks in the train-station complex. **ADA** (☎03 80 51 90 90; 109 av Jean Jaurès) 2km south of the station.

TRAIN For destinations within Burgundy, see town listings in this chapter. In Dijon centre, purchase tickets at the **SNCF Boutique** (55 rue du Bourg; ☎12.30-7pm Mon, 10am-7pm Tue-Sat). Trains leave the **train station** (rue du Dr Remy) for the following:

Lyon-Part Dieu €34, two hours, 25 daily

Nice €90, 6¼ hours by TGV, two direct daily

Paris Gare de Lyon €61, 1¾ hours by TGV; €44, three hours non-TGV; 20 daily

Strasbourg €49, 3½ hours by TGV, 4½ hours non-TGV; nine daily

Getting Around

A tram system is being built with a planned 2013 launch; as a result, some streets are incredibly torn up, which makes for a maze of diversions.

BICYCLE The **main tourist office** (per half/full-day €12/18) rents bikes with free helmets.

Velodi (☎08 00 20 03 05; www.velodi.net, in French) Dijon's version of Paris' Vélip' automatic rental system; 400 city bikes at 33 sites around town.

BUS Get details of Dijon's bus network, operated by Divia, from **L'Espace Bus** (☎08 00 10 20 04; www.divia.fr, in French; place Grangier; ☎7.30am-6.45pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-6.30pm Sat). Buses run every 10 to 15 minutes from 5.30am to midnight (from 9am on Sunday).

Forfait Journée ticket €3.40, unlimited trips all day, at tourist office

L'Espace Bus seven-day pass €9.70, valid for one week, from tourist office or L'Espace Bus

Single ticket €1, unlimited use within one hour, sold by drivers

A free Diviaciti minibus does a city-centre circuit every six minutes from 7am to 8pm Monday to Saturday.

CAR & MOTORCYCLE All city-centre parking is metered. Free spots are available (clockwise from the train station): northwest of rue Devosge, northeast of bd Thiers, southeast of bd

Carnot, south of rue du Transvaal and on the other side of the train tracks from the city centre. There's a free car park at place Suquet, just south of the police station.

TAXI Call ☎03 80 41 41 12.

Côte d'Or Vineyards

Burgundy's most renowned vintages come from the vine-covered Côte d'Or (literally Golden Hillside, but it is actually an abbreviation of Côte d'Orient or Eastern Hillside), the narrow, eastern slopes of a range of hills made of limestone, flint and clay that runs south from Dijon for about 60km. The exquisite terrain with its patchwork of immaculate hand-groomed vines is dotted with peaceful stone villages where every house seems to hold a vintner.

Sights

Beaune's sights are covered in the city listings.

Abbaye de Cîteaux

ABBEY

(☎03 80 61 32 58; www.citeaux-abbaye.com, in French; D996) In contrast to the showy Benedictines of Cluny, the medieval Cistercian order was known for its austerity, discipline and humility, and for the productive manual labour of its monks, one result of which was groundbreaking wine-producing techniques. The order was named after Cîteaux Abbey (Cistercium in Latin), south of Dijon and 13km east of Nuits-St-Georges, where it was founded in 1098. It enjoyed phenomenal growth in the 12th century under St Bernard (1090-1153), and some 600 Cistercian abbeys soon stretched from Scandinavia to the Near East.

Out in the midst of pastoral mustard fields, Cîteaux was virtually destroyed during the Revolution and the monks didn't return until 1898, but today it is home to about 35 monks. You can visit the monastery on a 1½-hour **guided tour** (adult/child €7.50/4; ☎tours 10.30am, 11.30am & several times 2-5pm Wed-Sat & Sun afternoon May-Sep, plus Tue Jul & Aug) in French with printed English commentary. It includes an audio-visual presentation on monastic life. Phone ahead or email for reservations.

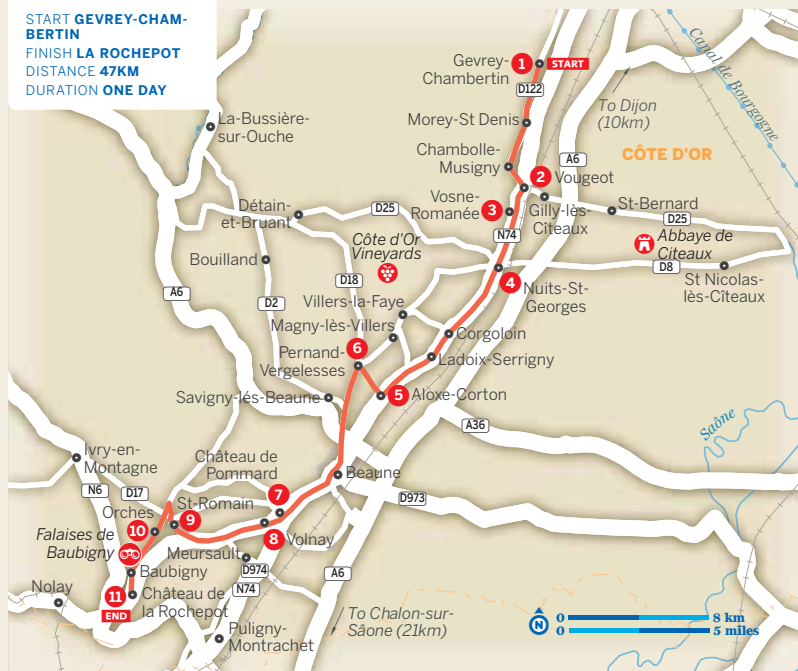
Visitors may attend daily prayers and Sunday Mass (10.30am). The boutique sells edibles made at monasteries around France, including the abbey's own cheese.

START **GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN**

FINISH **LA ROCHEPOT**

DISTANCE **47KM**

DURATION **ONE DAY**



Driving Tour

Route des Grands Crus

Burgundy's most famous wine route, the **Route des Grands Crus** (www.road-of-the-fine-burgundy-wines.com), and its often-narrow variants wend their way between stone-built villages with steeple-topped churches or the turrets of a château peeping above the trees. Vines cascade down the slopes between hamlets – Chambertin, Chambolle, Chassagne, Montrachet. The Côte's lower slopes are seas of vineyards; on the upper slopes, vines give way to forests, cliffs and breathtaking views. Signposted in brown, the Route des Grands Crus generally follows the tertiary roads west of the N74.

Coming from Dijon, the Côte de Nuits begins in earnest just south of Marsannay-la-Côte. Most of the area's *grand cru* vineyards lie between **1 Gevrey-Chambertin** (p403) and Vosne-Romanée. In **2 Vougeot**, stop at the historic château (p419). **3 Vosne-Romanée** (p403) is famed for its Romanée Conti wines, among Burgundy's most prestigious and priciest. Continuing south, visit the Cassissium (p403) in **4 Nuits-St-Georges**.

On the Côte de Beaune, the impossibly steep coloured-tile roof of Château Corton-André in **5 Aloxe-Corton** is easy to spot, just off the one-lane main street.

6 Pernand-Vergelesses is nestled in a little valley hidden from the N74.

South of Beaune, **7 Château de Pommard** (www.chateau-de-pommard.tm.fr), surrounded by a stone wall, is on the D973 on the northeast edge of town. Wander quaint **8 Volnay** to its hillside church. Off the main track, **9 St-Romain** is a bucolic village situated right where vineyardland meets pastureland, forests and cliffs. Hiking trails from here include the spectacular **Sentier des Roches**, a circuit that follows part of the GR7 and the D171 along the top of the **Falaises de Baubigny** (Baubigny cliffs), 300m above the Saône. Finally, via the hillside hamlet of **10 Orches**, which has breathtaking vineyard views, travel to the fantastic 15th-century **11 Château de La Rochepot** (p403).



Château de La Rochepot

CASTLE

(☎03 80 21 71 37; www.larochepot.com; La Rochepot; adult/child €7.50/4; ☉10am-5.30pm Wed-Mon) Conical towers and multicoloured tile roofs rise from thick woods above the ancient village of La Rochepot. Cross the drawbridge and knock three times to gain entry to this marvellous medieval fortress, most famously owned by Knights Régnier and Philippe Pot of the Order of the Golden Fleece. Terraces offer fab views of surrounding countryside and the interiors are a fascinating combination of the utilitarian (weapons) and the luxe (fine paintings). Tours are in French but most guides speak English and an English text is provided.

Cassissium

LIQUEUR FACTORY

(☎03 80 62 49 70; www.cassissium.com; Av du Jura, Nuits-St-Georges; adult/child €7.50/5.50; ☉10am-1pm & 2-7pm, last visits 1½hr before closing; 🍷) This museum and factory worships all things liqueur, with a particular focus on the blackcurrant, from which cassis is made. There's fun for the whole family: movies, displays, a 30-minute guided tour and a tasting with non-alcoholic fruit syrups for the kids. Off rue des Frères Montgolfier in the industrial area east of N74. Has a map of the *Route du Cassis*, a nice trip through the countryside.

Château de Savigny

MUSEUM CASTLE

(☎03 80 21 55 03; Savigny-les-Beaune; ☉9am-6.30pm) Drop in for wine tasting and stay to see the unexpected collection of race cars, motorcycles, airplanes and fire trucks.



Activities

Wine Tasting

WINE TASTING

The villages of the Côte d'Or offer innumerable places to sample and purchase world-class wines a short walk from where they were made. See Dijon or Beaune for tours of the vineyards, or drive the Routes des Grands Crus and keep your eyes open for bottles from the listed winemakers in these villages: **Beaune** (Luis Jadot, Joseph Drouhin and Bouchard Père et Fils), **Gevrey-Chambertin** (Denis Bachelet and Domaine Fourrier), **Magny-lès-Villers** (Domaine Cornu), **Meursault** (Comtes Lafon), **Morey-St-Denis** (Domaine Du-jac), **Nuits-St-Georges** (Joseph Faiveley), **Savigny-lès-Beaune** (Domaine Chandon de Briailles), **Volnay** (Domaine Hubert de Montille) **Vosne-Romanée** (Domaine de la Romanée Conti).

Fromagerie Delin

CHEESE TASTING

(☎03 80 62 87 20; 6 rue des Maizières, Gilly-les-Cîteaux; ☉9am-noon & 2-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-12.30pm Sat) Try and buy traditional cheeses.

Walking

WALKS

The GR7 and its variant, the GR76, run along the Côte d'Or from a bit west of Dijon to the hills west of Beaune, from where they continue southwards. The Beaune tourist office sells an excellent guide, *Walks in the Beaune Countryside* (€3), which details 30 marked routes.

Cycling

CYCLING

To get from Dijon to Beaune by bike, follow the quiet (but almost vergeless/shoulderless) D122, which gradually becomes pretty south of Couchey, to Nuits-St-Georges. From there, take either the challenging D8 and the D115C, or the flatter D20, just east of the N74, which offers fine views of the wine slopes. The ride takes three or four hours and covers about 50km. To avoid cycling both ways (or through Dijon's ugly and heavily trafficked urban sprawl, which stretches as far south as Marsannay-la-Côte), you can take your bike along on most Dijon-Beaune trains; look for the bicycle symbol on train schedules.

The 20km **Voie des Vignes** (Vineyard Way), a bike route marked by rectangular green-on-white signs, goes from Beaune's Parc de la Bouzaize via Pommard, Volnay, Meursault, Puligny-Montrachet and Chassagne-Montrachet to Santenay, where you can pick up the **Voie Verte** to Cluny. The Beaune tourist office sells a detailed map, *The Beaune-Santenay Cycle Track* (€2).



Sleeping

Tourist offices have lists of the area's plentiful accommodation, most of which is of a higher calibre than nearby cities.



Villa Louise Hôtel

HOTEL €€

(☎03 80 26 46 70; www.hotel-villa-louise.fr, in French; Aloxe-Corton; d €100-195; 📞📧📺) Who needs city life when you can stow away in vineyard-side luxury? This tranquil mansion houses elegant, modern rooms, each of them dreamily different. The expansive garden stretches straight to the edge of the vineyard and a separate gazebo shelters the sauna and pool. Genteel Louise Perrin presides, and has a private *cave*, perfect for wine tastings. Reserve ahead as this beauty is often fully booked.

Domaine Corgette

B&B €€

(☎03 80 21 68 08; www.domainecorgette.com; rue de la Perrière, St-Romain; d incl breakfast €80-90; ☎) The sun-drenched terrace at this renovated winery looks out on the dramatic cliffs. Tucked in the centre of the quiet village of St-Romain, its rooms are light and airy with crisp linen, and retain classic touches like fireplaces and wood floors.

Maison des Abeilles

B&B €

(☎03 80 62 95 42; http://perso.wanadoo.fr/maison-des-abeilles, in French; Magny-les-Villars; d incl breakfast €58-64, q €90; ☎) Sweet and jolly Jocelyne maintains this impeccably clean *chambre d'hôte* in a small village in the Haute Côte. Rooms have colourful linen and breakfasts are a feast of breads and homemade jams.

La Closerie de Gilly

B&B €€

(☎03 80 62 87 74; www.closerie-gilly.com; av Bouchard, Gilly-lès-Cîteaux; d incl breakfast €75-95, q €120-140, 2-person apt per week €300-425; ☎) A homey five-room B&B inside a delightful 18th-century *maison bourgeoise* with a huge, flowery garden. Has bicycles for rent and offers wine-tasting.

Château de Gilly

CASTLE HOTEL €€€

(☎03 80 62 89 98; www.chateau-gilly.com; Gilly-lès-Cîteaux; d €170-326, ste €438-768; ☎) This once-posh hotel occupies the 14th- and 17th-century residence of the abbots of Cîteaux. Spacious rooms look a bit worn, but it's a chance to stay in a castle. Free bicycle use.

**Eating**

Excellent restaurants are tucked away in the villages of the Côte d'Or. Explore! Château de Gilly offers a deal of a three-course lunch (€19). Reserve ahead in high season.

Les Terrasses de Corton

BURGUNDIAN €€

(☎03 80 26 42 37; 38 rte de Beaune, Ladoix-Serrigny; menus €24-40, s/d €48/60; ☎noon-1.45pm & 7.30-9pm, closed Wed & lunch Thu, also closed dinner Sun late Oct-early Mar) On the N74 near the southern edge of Ladoix-Serrigny, this place looks like a motel but in fact serves great-value French and Burgundian cuisine. The comfortable dining room fills up with chatting villagers enjoying dishes like home-style *boeuf bourguignon* or glazed duck with sweet potatoes. There are simple rooms upstairs.

Le Chambolle

BURGUNDIAN €€

(☎03 80 62 86 26; 28 rue Basse, Chambolle-Musigny; menus €23-40; ☎12.15-1.30pm or 2pm & 7.15-8.30pm Fri-Tue) This unpretentious back-roads gem creates traditional Burgundian cuisine with the freshest ingredients. Asparagus in season is a symphony in your mouth. On the D122, a bit east of Vougeot in gorgeous Chambolle-Musigny.

Le Charlemagne

GASTRONOMIC FUSION €€€

(☎03 80 21 51 45; www.lecharlemagne.fr, in French; Pernand-Vergelesses; lunch menus Mon, Thu & Fri €29-35, other menus €50-90; ☎noon-1.30pm Thu-Mon, 7-9.30pm Wed-Mon, closed dinner Wed Sep-May) Vineyard views are perhaps even more mind-blowing than the imaginatively prepared dishes melding French cuisine with techniques and ingredients from Japan. Attentive service is like a ballet.

La Cabotte

MODERN FRENCH €€

(☎03 80 6120 77; 24 Grand' Rue, Nuits-St-Georges; menus €28-49; ☎lunch Tue-Fri, dinner Tue-Sat) This intimate restaurant serves up refined, inventive versions of French dishes. No artifice or posing here, just excellent, if sometimes surprising, food.

i Getting There & Around

For details on public transport around Côte d'Or wine villages, see p409 and p401.

Beaune

POP 22,720

Beaune (pronounced similarly to 'bone'), 44km south of Dijon, is the unofficial capital of the Côte d'Or. This thriving town's *raison d'être* and the source of its *joie de vivre* is wine: making it, tasting it, selling it, but most of all, drinking it. Consequently Beaune is one of the best places in all of France for wine tasting.

The jewel of Beaune's old city is the magnificent Hôtel-Dieu, France's most splendid medieval charity hospital.

👁️ Sights

The amoeba-shaped old city is enclosed by thick stone **ramparts** and a stream which is in turn encircled by a one-way boulevard with seven names. The ramparts, which shelter wine cellars, are lined with overgrown gardens and ringed by a pathway that makes for a lovely stroll.

(☎03 80 24 45 00; rue de l'Hôtel-Dieu; adult/child €6.50/2.80; ☀9am-6.30pm, interior closes 1hr later) Built in 1443 by Nicolas Rolin, the chancellor to Philippe-le-Bon, and used as a hospital until 1971, this magnificent Gothic hospital building is famously topped by stunning turrets and pitched rooftops covered in multicoloured tiles. Fascinating interior highlights include the barrel-vaulted **Grande Salle** (look for the dragons and peasant heads up on the roof beams); the mural-covered **St-Hughes Room**; an 18th-century **pharmacy** where the nuns made their own medicaments and which is lined with flasks once filled with volatile oils, unguents, elixirs and powders such as *beurre d'antimoine* (antimony butter) and *poudre de cloportes* (woodlouse powder); the huge **kitchens**, with their open hearths; and the 16th-century Flanders **tapestry of St Eloi**. Do not miss the brilliant **Polyptych of the Last Judgement** by the Flemish painter Rogier van der Weyden. Created in the 15th century, this multipanelled masterpiece combines the lush colours of rainbows, the harsh results of the final judgement and a powerful, enigmatic yet serene Archangel Michael.

La Moutarderie

MUSTARD FACTORY

(Mustard Mill; www.fallot.com; 31 rue du Faubourg Bretonnière; adult/child €10/8; ☀tours 10am & 11.30am Mon-Sat, also afternoons summer, closed Nov-Mar 15; 🍷) Maison Fallot, Burgundy's last family-run stone-ground mustard company, offers tours of its facilities which include a museum about mustard. Demonstrations include hand-milling mustard seeds – young kids love it! Reserve ahead at the tourist office.

Basilique Collégiale Notre Dame

CHURCH

(place Général Leclerc; ☀8.30am-7pm) Built in the Romanesque and Gothic styles from the 11th to 15th centuries this church was once affiliated with the monastery of Cluny. It's notable for its extra-large porch, and medieval tapestries are displayed inside from Easter till the third weekend in November.



Activities

Underneath Beaune's buildings, streets and ramparts, millions of dusty bottles of wine are being aged to perfection in cool, dark cellars. Wine-tasting options abound; places below are just a wee sample of what's on offer. Also see p419.

Marché aux Vins

WINE TASTING

(☎03 80 25 08 20; www.marcheauxvins.com, in French; 2 rue Nicolas Rolin; admission €10; ☀9.30-11.45am & 2-5.45pm, no midday closure mid-Jun-Aug) Using a *tastevin*, sample an impressive 15 wines in the candle-lit former Église des Cordeliers and its cellars. Wandering among the vintages takes about an hour. The finest wines are at the end; look for the *premier crus* and the *grand cru*.

Cellier de la Vieille Grange

WINE TASTING

(☎03 80 22 40 06; www.bourgogne-cellier.com, in French; 27 bd Georges Clemenceau; ☀9am-noon & 2-7pm Wed-Sat, by appointment Sun-Tue) This is where locals come to buy Burgundy wines *en vrac* (in bulk) for as little as €1.25 per litre (from €3.40 per litre for AOC). Tasting is done direct from barrels using a pipette. Bring your own jerry can or buy a *cubitainer* (5/20L for €2.75/7.60) or something memorably called a *Vinibag*.

Lycée Viticole

WINE TASTING

(☎03 80 26 35 81; www.lavitibeaune.com, in French; 16 av Charles Jaffelin; ☀8am-noon & 2-5.30pm Mon-Thu, to 5pm Fri, 8am-noon Sat, closed 2 weeks mid-Aug) One of about 20 French secondary schools (at least one in each wine-producing region) that trains young people in every aspect of winemaking. You can visit the cellars and taste the prize-winning wines made by the students, something they're officially not allowed to do till they're 18. (Decades ago wine used to be served with lunch in the school cafeteria!)

Patriarche Père et Fils

WINE TASTING

(☎03 80 24 53 78; www.patriarche.com; 5 rue du Collège; audioguide tour €10; ☀9.30-11.30am & 2-5.30pm) The largest cellars in Burgundy, they are lined with about five million bottles of wine. The oldest is a Beaune Villages AOC from 1904. Visitors sample 13 wines and take the *tastevin* home.



PASS BEAUNE

If you'll be taking in a lot of Beaune and the Côte d'Or's sights and activities, including wine tasting, consider picking up the Pass Beaune at one of the tourist offices. Ticket combos save 5% to 15% depending on the number of sights you plan to visit from Cluny to the Côte d'Or.

WALKS, CYCLING

daily from Rue de l'Hôtel-Dieu and tours
the old town.

The tourist office handles reservations for **hot-air-balloon rides** (p394), and for **vineyard tours** (per adult/child €38-42/19-21) run by the following companies: **Chemins de Bourgogne** (www.chemins-de-bourgogne.com), **Safari Tours** (www.burgundy-tourism-safaritours.com) and **Vinéatours** (www.vineatours.com).



Tours

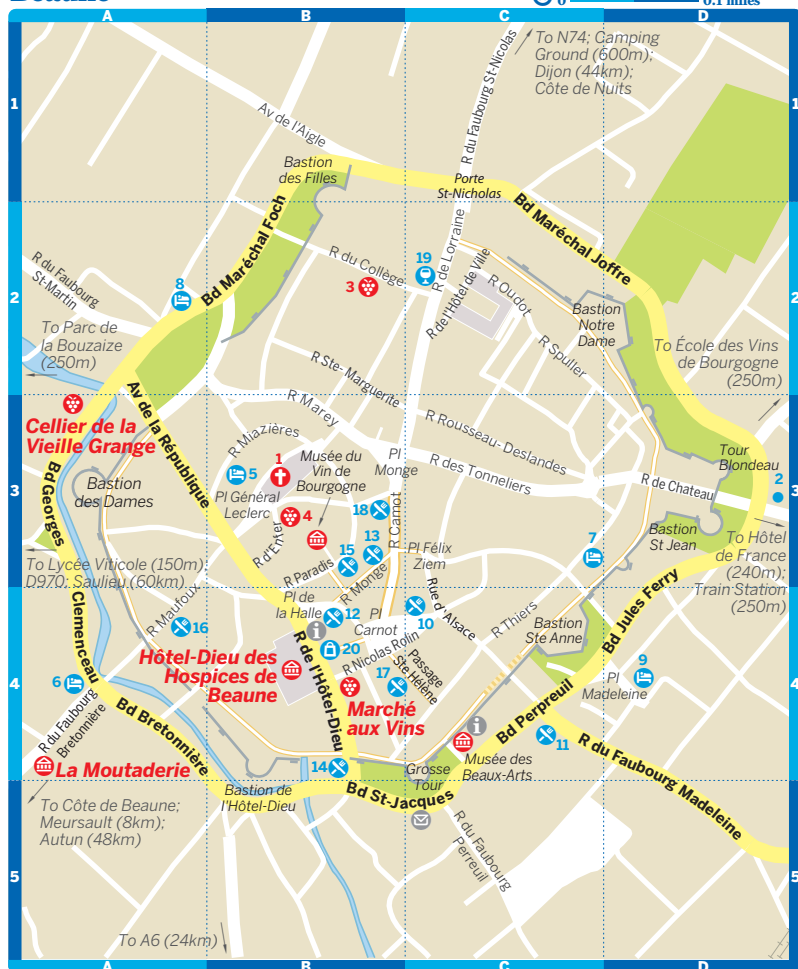
The small tourist train, **Visiotrain** (☎06 08 07 45 68; adult/child €6.50/4; 🕒11am-5.30pm, closed Wed & morning Sat), departs six times



Festivals & Events

Trois Glorieuses Festival WINE FESTIVAL
On the third weekend in November is the grandest of the Côte d'Or's many wine fes-

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tivals. As part of this three-day extravaganza, the Hospices de Beaune holds a private auction of wines from its endowment, 61 hectares of prime vineyards bequeathed by benefactors; proceeds go to medical facilities and research.

Sleeping

Reserve ahead.

Hôtel des Remparts HISTORIC HOTEL €€
(☎03 80 24 94 94; www.hotel-remparts-beaune.com; 48 rue Thiers; d €75-112; 🍷🍷🍷) Set around two delightful courtyards, this 17th-century town house sits on a quiet street in the old town. Rooms have red tile floors, simple antique furniture and luxurious bathrooms. Friendly staff rent bikes. Parking €8 to €10.

Beaune

Top Sights

Cellier de la Vieille Grange.....	A3
Hôtel-Dieu des Hospices de Beaune.....	B4
La Moutaderie.....	A4
Marché aux Vins.....	B4

Sights

1 Basilique Collégiale Notre Dame.....	B3
--	----

Activities, Courses & Tours

2 Bourgogne Randonnées.....	D3
3 Patriarche Père et Fils.....	B2
4 Sensations Vin.....	B3

Sleeping

5 Abbaye de Maizières.....	B3
6 Hôtel de la Poste.....	A4
7 Hôtel des Remparts.....	C3
8 Hôtel le Foch.....	A2
9 Hôtel Rousseau.....	D4

Eating

10 Alain Hess Fromager.....	C4
11 Caves Madeline.....	C4
12 Food Market.....	B4
13 Le Bistrot Bourguignon.....	B3
14 Le Jardin des Remaprts.....	B4
15 Le P'tit Paradis.....	B3
16 Loiseau des Vignes.....	A4
17 Ma Cuisine.....	B4
Marché Gourmand.....	(see 12)
18 Petit Casino Supermarket.....	B3

Drinking

19 Les Mille et Une Vignes.....	C2
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Shopping

20 Athenaeum de la Vigne et du Vin.....	B4
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Hôtel Rousseau

HOTEL €

(☎03 80 22 13 59; 11 place Madeleine; d incl breakfast €58) An endearingly old-fashioned, 12-room hotel, off the beaten path and run since 1959 by a friendly woman. Reception occasionally shuts for a while without warning so she can go shopping. Parking free.

Hôtel de la Poste

HISTORIC HOTEL €€€

(☎03 80 22 08 11; www.hoteldepostebeaune.com; 1 bd Georges Clemenceau; d €160-220; 🍷🍷) This swank establishment sits on a site that's been home to a hostelry since 1660. The old-time wooden lift carries you to spacious, soothing rooms; no bling here, just impeccable understated elegance. Wheelchair access. Parking €10.

Abbaye de Maizières

HISTORIC HOTEL €€

(☎03 80 24 74 64; www.beaune-abbaye-maizieres.com; 19 rue Maizières; d €112; @) An idiosyncratic hotel inside a 12th-century abbey whose 13 tastefully converted rooms, with modern bathrooms, make creative use of the old brickwork and ancient wooden beams. No lift. Parking €8.

Hôtel de France

HOTEL €

(☎03 80 24 10 34; www.hoteldefrance-beaune.com; 35 av du 8 Septembre; s/d/tr/q from €38/65/75/85; 🍷@🍷🍷) An unsurprising but comfortable, sound-proofed place with 21 cheery rooms. Near the station, it's ideal if you're arriving by train. Parking €8.50.

Camping Ground

CAMPGROUND €

(☎03 80 22 03 91; campinglescentvignes@mairie-beaune.fr; 10 rue Auguste Dubois; sites per adult/tent €3.80/4.50; ☀️mid-Mar-Oct) A flowery, well-equipped campground 700m north of the centre.

Hôtel le Foch

HOTEL €

(☎03 80 24 05 65; www.hotelbeaune-lefoch.fr, in French; 24 bd Maréchal Foch; d €43-50) A cheapie, run by a friendly proprietress, whose 10 rooms are basic but clean.



Eating

Beaune harbours a host of excellent restaurants; you'll find many around place Carnot, place Félix Ziem and place Madeleine. Reserve ahead in high season.



Loiseau des Vignes GASTRONOMIC €€€

(☎03 80 24 12 06; 31 rue Maufoux; lunch menus €20-28, dinner menus €59-75; ☀️Tue-Sat) Give yourself up to the splendour of delicate concoctions like an egg poached in

CHEESE, GLORIOUS CHEESE

What else would you pair with your dram of wine but one of the Burgundy or Champagne region's AOC cheeses? There are three, all made with cow's milk.

» **Époisses** – invented in the 16th century by the monks at Abbaye de Cîteaux, Époisses is a soft, round, orange-skinned white cheese. It takes a month to make, using washes of salt water, rainwater and Marc de Bourgogne (local pomace brandy), resulting in a strong, creamy flavour. Soumaintrain, a milder cheese (but with a spicy burst at the end of a tasting), is similar in appearance.

» **Langres** – milder than Époisses, but saltier, you'll know the Langres cheese by its unique shape: a depression in the top, perfect for holding a splash of Marc.

» **Chaource** – these elegant little wheels of soft white cheese can be quite fluid when young. A bit like Camembert, they are ideal with sparkling wines.

white wine with shallots...light as a dream. Could be the best egg you ever eat in your life. Wines are served only by the glass (€3 to €80) from snazzy sleek red degustation contraptions ringing the hushed but relaxed dining room. Service is knowledgeable and attentive, making a meal here a true pleasure.

Caves Madeleine

BURGUNDIAN €€

(☎03 80 22 93 30; 8 rue du Faubourg Madeleine; menus €14-24; ☺closed Thu, Sun & lunch Fri) A convivial Burgundian restaurant, much appreciated by locals who prize good value; regional classics include *boeuf bourguignon* and *cassiolette d'escargots*. Join fellow diners at long communal wooden tables surrounded by wine racks.

Le Bistrot Bourguignon

BURGUNDIAN €€

(☎03 80 22 23 24; 8 rue Monge; lunch menu €12.50, mains €16-19; ☺Tue-Sat) This lively bistro and wine bar serves hearty cuisine billed as *régionale et originale* and 17 Burgundy wines by the glass (€3 to €9). Hosts live jazz at least once a month.

Le P'tit Paradis

MODERN BURGUNDIAN €€

(☎03 80 24 91 00; 25 rue Paradis; lunch menus €19, dinner menus €28-36; ☺Tue-Sat) Find this intimate restaurant on a narrow medieval street. An excellent place for *cuisine élaborée* (creatively transformed versions of traditional dishes) made with fresh local products. Has a terrace open in summer.

Le Jardin des Remparts

GASTRONOMIC €€€

(☎03 80 24 79 41; 10 rue de l'Hôtel-Dieu; lunch menus €28, dinner menus €45-70; ☺Tue-Sat) On the cool terrace under umbrellas or in the refined dining room, dine on treats like foie gras poached with tarragon.

Ma Cuisine

BURGUNDIAN €€

(☎03 80 22 30 22; passage Ste-Hélène; menu €22; ☎12.15-1.30pm & 7.15-9pm Mon, Tue, Thu & Fri, closed Aug) A low-key place hidden down an alley. Traditional dishes include whole roasted Bresse pigeon (€32). The wine list has 850 vintages (€18 to €830).

Self-Catering

Food Market

MARKET €

(place de la Halle; ☎until 12.30pm Sat) Elaborate weekly market. There's a much smaller *marché gourmand* (gourmet market) on Wednesday morning.

Alain Hess Fromager

CHEESE SHOP €

(7 place Carnot; ☎9am-12.15pm & 2.30-7.15pm Mon-Sat, plus 10am-1pm Sun Easter-Dec) Fine cheeses and mustards.

Petit Casino

SUPERMARKET €

(4 rue Carnot; ☎9am-7.30pm Tue-Sat, 8.30am-12.30pm Sun)



Drinking

Chatty locals jam **Les Mille et Une Vignes** (61 rue de Lorraine; ☎Tue-Sat) for drinks at night and quieter coffees during the day.



Shopping

Athenaeum de la Vigne et du Vin

BOOKSHOP

(☎03 80 25 08 30; www.athenaeumfr.com; 7 rue de l'Hôtel-Dieu; ☎10am-7pm) Stocks thousands of titles on oenology (the art and science of winemaking), including many in English, as well as recipe books and wine-related gifts.



Information

Get online at the main tourist office (€1.50 per 15 minutes) and at **Le Clos Carnot** (☎03 80 22 73 43; 34 place Carnot; per hr €4; ☎8am-midnight), a café-brasserie.

Post office (7 bd St-Jacques) Exchanges currency.

Tourist office (☎03 80 26 21 30; www.beaune-tourisme.fr); branch (1 rue de l'Hôtel-Dieu; ☎10am-1pm & 2-6pm); main office (6 bd Perpreuil; ☎9am-7pm Mon-Sat, 9am-6pm Sun) Sells Pass Beaune ticket combos.

Getting There & Away

BUS Transco (☎08 00 10 20 04) bus 44 links Beaune with Dijon (€1.50, 1½ hours, two to seven daily), stopping at Côte d'Or villages such as Vougeot, Nuits-St-Georges and Aloxe-Corton. Services reduced in July and August. In Beaune, buses stop along the boulevards around the old city. Timetables at the tourist office.

CAR ADA (☎03 80 22 72 90; 26 av du 8 Septembre) rents cars, scooters (€23 per day) and bikes (€14).

TRAIN Trains connect the following places:

Dijon €11, 25 minutes, 40 daily

Nuits-St-Georges €11, 10 minutes, 40 daily

Paris Gare de Lyon €64 to €118, 2¼ hours by TGV (non-TGV 4½ hours), 20 daily, two direct TGVs daily

Lyon-Part Dieu €31 to €46, 1¾ hours, 16 daily

Mâcon €13, 50 minutes, 16 daily

Getting Around

Parking is free outside the town walls. See p406 for bicycle hire.

Taxi Call ☎06 09 43 21 31 or 06 09 43 12 08.

Pays d'Auxois

West of Dijon, along and around the Canal de Bourgogne, the Pays d'Auxois is verdant and rural. Broad mustard fields, wooded hills and escarpments are dotted with fortified hilltop towns, including Semur-en-Auxois.

SEMUR-EN-AUXOIS

POP 4568

Sights & Activities

Surrounded by a hairpin turn in the River Armançon, this beguiling town is guarded by four massive, 13th- and 14th-century pink-granite bastions. Fear not, the 44m-high **Tour de la Orle d'Or** is not likely to collapse any time soon, those menacing cracks have been there since 1589!

Old City

HISTORIC QUARTER

Most of the old city was built when Semur was an important religious centre boasting no fewer than six monasteries. The tourist

office (which has a free walking tour brochure) is next to two concentric medieval gates, **Porte Sauvigne** (1417) and fortified **Porte Guillier** (13th century). Through the gates, pedestrianised **rue Buffon** is lined with 17th-century houses. The **confectionary shop** (14 rue Buffon; ☎Tue-Sun) produces semurettes, delicious dark-chocolate truffles created here a century ago. The **Promenade du Rempart** affords panoramic views from atop the western part of Semur's medieval battlements.

Musée Municipal

MUSEUM

(☎03 80 97 24 25; rue Jean-Jacques Colletot; ☎10am-noon & 2-6pm Wed-Mon) Great for the kids, with its extravaganza of stuffed fauna and its enormous fossils. These natural history exhibits are arranged just as they were back in the 19th century. The collection also includes sculpture and paintings.

Collégiale Notre Dame

CHURCH

(☎9am-noon & 2-6.30pm) A stained-glass window (1927) and a plaque commemorating American soldiers who fell in France in WWI are inside this twin-towered, Gothic collegiate church.

Sleeping & Eating

Hôtel de la Côte d'Or

HOTEL 

(☎03 80 97 24 54; www.auxois.fr; 1 rue de la Liberté; d €95-125; ☎@☎) Totally renovated in 2008, contemporary furnishings in the rooms blend beautifully with the old beams and stone fireplaces. Some of the fantastic bathrooms have jacuzzis. Check ahead for discounts.

WORTH A TRIP

GRAND FORGE DE BUFFON

The beautiful **Grand Forge de Buffon** (<http://forge.buffon.iframe.com>, in French; adult/child €6/free; ☎10am-noon & 2.30-6pm Wed-Mon Apr-Sep) sits on the pastoral banks of the Brenne Canal. One of the first fully integrated factories, it was built in 1778 by Georges-Louis Leclerc, the Count of Buffon and a mathematician and naturalist. The forge's existing buildings include a blast furnace that was used for casting molten metals and a supply channel with paddlewheel. The forge sits 8km west of Montbard near the village of Buffon on the D905.

ESCARGOTS

One of France's trademark culinary habits, the consumption of gastropod molluscs – preferably with butter, garlic, parsley and fresh bread – is inextricably linked in the public mind with Burgundy because *Helix pomatia*, though endemic in much of Europe, is best known as *escargot de Bourgogne* (the Burgundy snail). Once a regular, and unwelcome, visitor to the fine-wine vines of Burgundy and a staple on Catholic plates during Lent, the humble hermaphroditic crawler has been decimated by over-harvesting and the use of agricultural chemicals, and is now a protected species. As a result, the vast majority of the critters impaled on French snail forks (the ones with two tongues) are now imported from Turkey, Greece and Eastern Europe.

Hôtel des Cymaises

(☎03 80 97 21 44; www.hotelcymaises.com; 7 rue du Renaudot; s/d/tr €58/63/79; 🍷) Set around a quiet courtyard in a grand 18th-century *maison bourgeoise* are comfortable, slightly worn rooms, four apartments and a bright veranda for breakfast.

Carpe Diem

(☎03 80 97 00 35; 4 rue du Vieux Marché; menus €11.50-21; ☺10.30am-2am Tue-Sun; 🍷) This friendly neighbourhood bar serves simple meals and hosts occasional live music (jazz, blues) and offers internet access.

Café des Arts

(4 place Gaveau; ☺Tue-Sun) Hosts art exhibitions and serves light meals.

Petit Casino

(32 place Notre Dame; ☺8am-12.30pm & 3-7.30pm, closed Sun afternoon & Mon)

Information

The **tourist office** (☎03 80 97 05 96; www.ville-sembur-en-auxois.fr, in French; 2 place Gaveau; ☺9am-noon & 2-5pm or 6pm Mon-Sat, closed Mon Oct-Apr; 📖) has a free walking-tour brochure in English and a **SNCF train ticket machine**. Carpe Diem bistro offers free **internet** and wi-fi with a drink or meal.

Getting There & Away

Transco (☎08 00 10 20 04) bus 49 (two or three daily) goes to Dijon (€1.50, 1¼ hours) and Avallon (40 minutes). Bus 70 goes to Montbard (€1.50, 20 to 60 minutes, three to nine daily) on the Paris–Dijon rail line.

ABBAYE DE FONTENAY

Founded in 1118 and restored to its medieval glory a century ago, **Abbaye de Fontenay** (Fontenay Abbey; ☎03 80 92 15 00; www.abbayedefontenay.com; adult/child €9.50/5.50; ☺10am-6pm Apr-11 Nov, 10am-noon & 2-5pm 12 Nov-Mar) offers a fascinating glimpse of the austere, serene surroundings in which

Cistercian monks lived lives of contemplation, prayer and manual labour. Set in a bucolic wooded valley along a stream called Ru de Fontenay, the abbey, a Unesco World Heritage Site, includes an unadorned Romanesque church, a barrel-vaulted monks' dormitory, landscaped gardens and the first metallurgical factory in Europe with a forge from 1220. Guided **tours** (☺hourly 10am-5pm) are in French with printed information in six languages.

From the parking lot, the **GR213 trail** forms part of two verdant walking circuits: one to Montbard (13km return), the other (11.5km) through Touillon and Le Petit Jailly. Maps and extensive guides to plant life are available in the abbey shop.

Fontenay is 25km north of Semur-en-Auxois. A **taxi** (☎03 80 92 31 49, 03 80 92 04 79) from the Montbard TGV train station – trains go to Dijon (€16 to €27, 40 minutes) – costs €15 (30% more on Sunday and holidays).

Châtillon-sur-Seine

POP 6257

Châtillon's main claim to fame is the **Trésor de Vix** (Vix Treasure), a collection of Celtic, Etruscan and Greek objects from the 6th century BC on display at the **Musée du Pays Châtillonnais** (☎03 80 91 24 67; www.musee-vix.fr; 14 rue de la Libération; adult/child €6/3; ☺9am-noon & 2-6pm). The treasure was discovered in 1953 in the tomb of the **Dame de Vix**, a Celtic princess who controlled the trade in Cornish tin in the 6th century. Mined in Cornwall, the tin was brought by boat up the Seine as far as Vix and then carried overland to the Saône and the Rhône, whence river vessels conveyed it south to Marseilles and its most eager consumers, the Greeks, who alloyed it with copper to make bronze. The outstanding collection

includes a jaw-droppingly massive bronze Greek *krater* (1.64m high and weighing 208kg!) that can hold 1100L of wine.

The **tourist office** (☎03 80 91 13 19; www.pays-chatillonnais.fr; 9-11 rue de la Libération; ☉9am-noon & 2-6pm Mon-Sat, plus 10am-noon Sun May-Sep) has information on Châtillonnais vineyards. **Au Stand** (☎03 80 91 22 53; 41 rue Maréchal de Lattre; per hr €4; ☉8am-9pm Tue-Sat, 8am-1pm Sun) has internet access.

The town's commercial centre, rebuilt after the war, is bordered by two branches of the Seine, here hardly more than a stream. A short walk east, the idyllic **Source de la Douix** (pronounced 'dwee'), a 600L-a-second artesian spring, flows from a 30m cliff. Perfect for a picnic, it is one of the oldest Celtic religious sites in Europe. Nearby, climb up to crenellated **Tour de Gissey** (c 1500s), for fine views.

Among the wines produced in the **Châtillonnais vineyards**, north of town, is Burgundy's own bubbly, *Crémant de Bourgogne* (www.cremantdebourgogne.fr, in French). Follow the **Route du Crémant**, marked by white-on-brown signs to the vineyards. The Champagne region's Côte des Bar vineyards are just a few kilometres further north.

The pleasant **Hôtel de la Côte d'Or** (☎03 80 91 13 29; www.logishotels.com; 2 rue Charles Ronot; d €60-70) has rooms with antique furnishings and a rustic **restaurant** (menus €20-40).

Bus 50, run by **Transco** (☎08 00 10 20 04), goes to Dijon (€15.50, 134 hours, two daily). SNCF buses go to the TGV train station in Montbard (40 minutes, two to five daily).

YONNE

The Yonne *département* (www.tourisme-yonne.com), roughly midway between Dijon and Paris, has long been Burgundy's northern gateway. The verdant countryside harbours the magical hilltop village of Vézelay, in the Parc Naturel Régional du Morvan, and the white-wine powerhouse, Chablis. Canal boats cruise from ancient river ports such as Auxerre.

Getting Around

Bus services in the Yonne are cheap but extremely limited. **Les Rapides de Bourgogne** (☎in Auxerre 03 86 94 95 00, in Avallon 03 86 34 00 00; www.rapidesdebourgogne.com, in French; office 39 rue de Paris, Avallon) bus lines

run only once or twice a day on school days, with two more daily services available on demand; ie you must make a reservation the day before, prior to 5pm, by internet or phone ☎08 00 30 33 09. Tourist offices have timetables.

Line 1 Links Auxerre with Pontigny

Line 4 Links Auxerre to Chablis and Tonnerre

Line 5 Links Avallon's Café de l'Europe taxi stand with Noyers-sur-Serein and Tonnerre

Auxerre

POP 39,756

The alluring riverside town of Auxerre (pronounced 'oh-sair') has been a port since Roman times. The old city clambers up the hillside on the west bank of the River Yonne. Wandering through the maze of its cobbled streets you come upon Roman remains, Gothic churches and timber-framed medieval houses. Views span a jumble of belfries, spires and steep tiled rooftops.

Auxerre makes a good base for exploring northern Burgundy, including Chablis, and is an excellent place to hire a canal boat (see p394).

Sight & Activities

Get wonderful city views from **Pont Paul Bert** (1857) and the arched footbridge opposite the main tourist office.

Abbaye St-Germain

ABBEY

(☎03 86 18 05 50; place St-Germain; adult/child €6.50/free; ☉10am-noon & 2-6.30pm Wed-Mon) This ancient abbey with its dramatic flying buttresses began as a basilica above the tomb of St Germain, the 5th-century bishop who made Auxerre an important Christian centre. By the Middle Ages it was attracting pilgrims from all over Europe.

The **crypt** (tours €4.80; ☉departures hourly), accessible by tour (in French with printed information in English), contains some of Europe's finest examples of Carolingian architecture. Supported by 1000-year-old oak beams, the walls and vaulted ceiling are decorated with 9th-century frescoes; the far end houses the tomb of St Germain himself. Excavations under the nave reveal sarcophagi from as early as the 6th century.

Housed around the abbey's cloister, the **Musée d'Art et d'Histoire** (admission included in Abbaye ticket) displays rotating contemporary art exhibits, prehistoric artefacts and Gallo-Roman sculptures.

The same ticket also gets you into the Musée Leblanc-Duvernoy.

Cathédrale St-Étienne

(place St-Étienne; ☉7.30am-6pm) This vast Gothic cathedral and its stately 68m-high bell tower dominate Auxerre's skyline. The choir, ambulatory and some of the vivid **stained-glass windows** date from the 1200s. The Gothic western front was badly damaged by the Huguenots during the Wars of Religion.

The 11th-century Romanesque **crypt** (adult/child €3/free; ☉9am-6pm Mon-Sat, 2-6pm Sun, closed Sun Nov-Easter) is ornamented

with remarkable frescoes, including a scene of **Christ à Cheval** (Christ on Horseback; late 11th century) unlike any other known in Western art. Upstairs, the **treasury** (adult/child €1.90/free) has an Entombment painting by Luca Penni (16th century) and illuminated manuscripts. Get tickets in the gift shop off the choir.

From June to September a 70-minute **sound-and-light show** (€5; ☉9.30pm or 10pm) is held nightly inside the cathedral. In July and August **organ concerts** (€5; ☉5pm or 6pm) take place every Sunday.

Auxerre

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Tour de l'Horloge

CLOCK TOWER

(btwn place de l'Hôtel de Ville & rue de l'Horloge) In the heart of Auxerre's partly medieval commercial precinct, the golden, spire-topped Tour de l'Horloge was built in 1483 as part of the city's fortifications. On the beautiful 17th-century clock faces (there's one on each side), the sun-hand indicates the time of day; the moon-hand shows the day of the lunar month, making a complete rotation every 29½ days.

Musée Leblanc-Duvernoy

MUSEUM

(9bis rue d'Églény; admission €2.20; ☎10am-moon & 2-6.30pm Wed-Sun, closed Mon-Fri Oct-Apr) Has a decent collection of faience (pottery) and 18th-century Beauvais tapestries. Admission included with Abbaye ticket.

Cycling

CYCLING

Cycling options include the towpath along the Canal du Nivernais to Clamecy (about 60km), just south of town. See www.la-bourgogne-a-velo.com (in French) for a map.

Boating

BOATS

The main tourist office rents **electric boats** (per 1hr/half/full day €20/48/85; ☎Wed-Sun Easter-Sep). It takes at least 1½ hours to get

to the locks on the Canal du Nivernais. For longer trips, several boat-hire companies are based in the Auxerre area; see p394.



Tours

The tourist office offers a **tour** (adult/child €5/3; ☎Sat & Sun Sep-Jun, daily Jul-Aug) of the town on an electric vehicle with an audio-guide; also group tours in English and the self-guided architectural walking tour brochure, *In the Steps of Cadet Roussel* (€1.50).

Across from the tourist office, **L'Hirondelle** (☎09 75 23 27 89; www.bateaux-auxerrois.com; adult/child €8.50/6; ☎Tue-Sun) has cruises with commentary.



Sleeping

TOP CHOICE Hôtel Le Parc des Maréchaux

HISTORIC HOTEL €€

(☎03 86 51 43 77; www.hotel-parcmarchaux.com; 6 av Foch; s €84-108, d €95-129; ☎@☎☎) Settle into a mansion of château-like proportions, where everything is treated with the height of gentility. Lounges are luxurious and rooms are decorated with impeccable taste. The two best rooms, great for a romantic getaway, have balconies overlooking the private park. Parking free.

Hôtel Le Commerce

HOTEL €

(☎03 86 52 03 16; hotelducommerceauxerre@wanadoo.fr; 5 rue René Schaeffer; s/d €45/52; ☎) Simple rooms smack in the centre of town have creative decor inspired by distant sun-ny lands. Parking €7.50.

Hôtel Normandie

HOTEL €€

(☎03 86 52 57 80; www.hotelnormandie.fr; 41 bd Vauban; d €69-99, q €125; ☎@☎☎) Ivy covers the 19th-century building, and rooms with views make it feel a bit like a country inn. Amenities include a billiard table, workout room and sauna (€6 per person). Wi-fi costs €3.



Eating

La Pause Gourmande

TEA HOUSE €

(☎03 86 33 98 87; 1 rue Fourier; mains €11; ☎lunch Tue-Sat) Locals cram this *salon de thé* for savoury, inventive salads or home-made foie gras on fresh-baked brioche with garnishes like apricots and shallots. The owner cooks right in front of you and also makes fresh pastries.

Le Flobert

BISTRO €

(☎03 86 51 16 19; 71 rue du Pont; lunch menus €12.50, mains €7.50; ☎lunch Tue-Sun, dinner Thu-Sun; ☎) The menu at this sweet little

Auxerre

Top Sights

Abbaye St-Germain	C1
Cathédrale St-Étienne	C2

Sights

1 Musée d'Art et d'Histoire	C1
2 Musée Leblanc-Duvernoy	A3
3 Tour de l'Horloge	B3

Activities, Courses & Tours

4 Bateaux de Bourgogne	C2
5 Electric Boat Rental	D2
L'Hirondelle	(see 5)

Sleeping

6 Hôtel Le Commerce	B4
7 Hôtel Normandie	A1

Eating

8 Food Market	A5
9 La P'tite Beursaude	C4
10 La Pause Gourmande	B3
11 Le Flobert	D4
12 Le St-Pèlerin	D3
13 Super Monoprix Supermarket	B4

Entertainment

14 Le Théâtre	C4
15 Mo' Better Blues	C4

spot, just a simple bar and a few tables in an elegant honey-coloured room, changes every day and always involves seasonal, fresh ingredients. Check the small slates for what's available. Kids' menu €8.

La P'tite Beursauze

BURGUNDIAN €€

(☎03 86 51 10 21; 55 rue Joubert; lunch menus €18.50-20, dinner menus €25-28; ☺Thu-Mon) Waitresses wearing traditional Morvan dress serve traditional fish and meat dishes. Specialities include rib steak with Époisses cheese.

Le St-Pélerin

BURGUNDIAN €€

(☎03 86 52 77 05; 56 rue St-Pélerin; menus €25-28; ☺Tue-Sat) Diners come back satiated from this rustic restaurant, where French and Burgundian dishes are prepared over a wood fire. Specialities include escargots and meats like ham in Chablisienne sauce.

Self-Catering

Food Market

MARKET €

(place de l'Arquebuse; ☺7am-1pm Tue & Fri)

Super Monoprix

SUPERMARKET €

(place Charles Surugue; ☺8.30am-8pm Mon-Sat)



Entertainment

Find out what's happening throughout the Yonne at www.citedesmusiques.org (in French).

Silex

ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX

(☎03 86 40 95 40; www.lesilex.fr, in French; 7 rue de l'Île aux Plaisirs) The city's new

theatre complex across the river has a packed slate of drama and concerts, from reggae to rock and jazz (www.jazzclubdauxerre.com, in French), free concerts on Thursday evenings and a Jazz Café.

Mo' Better Blues

MUSIC BAR

(☎03 86 51 36 64; 36-38 rue du Puits des Dames; admission free; ☺Wed-Sat) Dynamic jazz bar with live concerts, jam sessions and salsa courses.

Le Théâtre

THEATRE

(☎03 86 72 24 24; www.auxerretheatre.com, in French; 54 rue Joubert; ☺Sep-Jun) Stages music and dance performances.

i Information

Centre Hospitalier (☎03 86 48 48 48; 2 bd de Verdun) For medical services.

Post office (place Charles Surugue; ☺noon-6.30pm Mon, 9am-6.30pm Tue-Fri, 9am-12.15pm & 2-5pm Sat) Changes currency.

Speed Informatique 89 (32 rue du Pont; per 10min/1hr €1/5; ☺2-9pm Mon-Sat) Internet access.

Tourist office (☎03 86 52 06 19; www.ot-auxerre.fr) main office (1-2 quai de la République; ☺9am-1pm & 2-7pm Mon-Sat, 9.30am-1pm & 3-6.30pm Sun); place de l'Hôtel de Ville annexe (7 place de l'Hôtel de Ville; ☺10am-noon & 1.30-6pm Tue-Sat, also Sun Jul & Aug) Annexe will change small amounts of money on Sunday and holidays.

i Getting There & Away

BUS Les Rapides de Bourgogne (☎03 86 94 95 00; www.rapidesdebourgogne.com, in French) Schedules from the tourist office.

CAR ADA (☎03 86 46 01 02; 6bis av Gambetta)

Avis (☎03 86 46 83 47; train station)

Europcar (☎03 86 46 99 08; 9 av Gambetta)

TRAIN Trains run from **Gare Auxerre-St-Gervais** (rue Paul Doumer);

Aulun €28, 3¼ hours, one daily

Avallon €13, 1¼ hours, five daily

Dijon €33, two hours, 18 daily

Paris Gare de Lyon or Gare de Bercy €33, 1½ to 2½ hours, 20 daily

Sermizelles-Vézelay €11, one hour, three daily

i Getting Around

Free parking is available along the river on quais de la Marine and de la République, and on the boulevards that circle the old city: Chainette, Vauban, 11 Novembre and Vaulabelle.

BICYCLE Hire at the main tourist office (three/seven hours €10/18).

WORTH A TRIP

GET AWAY FROM IT ALL...

Domaine Dessus Bon Boire (☎03 86 53 89 99; www.dessusbonboire.com, in French; 19 rue de Vallan; s/d/tr/q incl breakfast €48/58/70/90; ☺☺), a family-run organic winery, is perfect for a countryside idyll. In sleepy riverside Vaux, 6km south of Auxerre, Catherine and André Donat maintain impeccable rooms with bright floral accents and plenty of peace and quiet. Sample their *aligoté* (a dry white wine) or their Côtes d'Auxerre. Breakfast often includes homebaked goodies.

Pop over the bridge in the evening for authentic, delicious wood-fired pizza at cheery **Pizza-Cotté** (☎03 86 53 33 30; 1 rue de la Poire, Champs-sur-Yonne; pizzas €10-12; ☺dinner Mon-Sat).

BUS Free **shuttle buses** (☺7.50am-12.10pm & 1.30-7.10pm Mon-Sat) circulate from the parking lot at la Porte de Paris throughout the old town.

TAXI Call ☎03 86 48 17 93 or ☎06 07 80 82 25.

Around Auxerre

Between the River Yonne and the Canal de Bourgogne lie the Auxerrois and the Tonnerrois, rural areas covered with forests, fields, pastures and vineyards. The quiet back roads (like the D124) and many of the walking trails make for excellent cycling.

LA PUISAYE

The countryside west of Auxerre, known as La Puisaye, is a lightly populated landscape of woods, winding creeks and dark hills. The area is best known as the birthplace of Colette (1873-1954), author of *La Maison de Claudine* and *Gigi* (and 50 other novels) and is of particular interest because much of her work explores her rural Burgundian childhood.

Colette lived till the age of 18 in the tiny town of St-Sauveur-en-Puisaye, 40km southwest of Auxerre. The **Musée Colette** (☎03 86 45 61 95; adult/child €5/2; ☺10am-6pm Wed-Mon Apr-Oct, 2-6pm Sat & Sun Nov-Mar), in the village château, displays letters, manuscripts, two furnished rooms from her apartment in Paris' Palais Royal and photos featuring her iconic hairdo.



Chantier Médiéval de Guédelon

(☎03 86 45 66 66; www.guedelon.fr; D955 near Treigny; adult/child €9/7; ☺10am-5.30pm or 6pm Thu-Tue, closed Oct-mid-Mar; ♣) is 45km southwest of Auxerre and 7km southwest of St-Sauveur-en-Puisaye. A team of skilled artisans, aided by archaeologists, has been hard at work building a fortified castle here since 1997 using only 13th-century techniques. No electricity or power tools here: stone is quarried on site using iron hand tools forged by a team of blacksmiths, who also produce vital items like door hinges. Clay for tiles is fired for three days using locally cut wood and the mortar, made on site with lime, is transported in freshly woven wicker baskets.

A very worthwhile guided tour, sometimes in English, costs €2 per person. Wear closed shoes, as the site is often a sea of muck. Child-oriented activities include stone carving (using especially soft stone).

The elegant 11th-century **Château de Ratilly** (☎03 86 74 79 54; www.chateauderatilly.

fr, in French; Treigny; adult/child €4/free; ☺10am-noon & 2-6pm Mon-Fri, 3-6pm Sat & Sun, no mid-day closure 15 Jun-15 Sep) sits in the countryside near Treigny and holds a collection of pottery by the Pierlot family and a changing series of excellent contemporary art exhibitions and concerts.

CHABLIS

POP 2580

The well-to-do, picturesque town of Chablis, 19km east of Auxerre, has made its fortune growing, ageing and marketing the dry white wines that have carried its name to the four corners of the earth.

Chablis is made exclusively from chardonnay grapes and originated with the monks of Pontigny. Now it is divided into four AOCs: Petit Chablis, Chablis, Chablis Premier Cru and, most prestigious of all, Chablis Grand Cru. The seven *grands crus* are lovingly grown on just 1 sq km of land on the hillsides northeast of town.

👁 Sights & Activities

Nearby villages worth exploring include **Courgis**, which offers great views; **Chichée** and **Chemilly**, both on the River Serein; and **Chitry-le-Fort**, famous for its fortified church. The gorgeous hillside village of **Fleys** has a number of wineries.

Old Town

HISTORIC CENTRE

The 12th- and 13th-century Gothic **Église St-Martin** (☺Jul & Aug), first founded in the 9th century by monks fleeing the Norman attacks on Tours, is two short blocks northwest of place Charles de Gaulle. Southeast along rue Porte Noël are the twin bastions of **Porte Noël** (1778), which hosts art exhibitions from June to August. Nearby, the enigmatic 16th-century building known as the **synagogue** (10-14 rue des Juifs) has been restored. The 12th-century cellar of **Petit Pontigny** (rue de Chichée) was once used by Pontigny's Cistercian monks to ferment wine.

Wine Tasting

WINE TASTING

Local wisdom says it is best to taste in the morning while the palate is fresh. For a vineyard tour, call **Chablis Vititours** (☎06 11 47 82 98; www.chablis-vititours.fr; 90min/full day €20/45, under 12yr free). Wine can be sampled and purchased at dozens of places (eg along rue des Moulins); the tourist office has a comprehensive list.

La Chablisienne (☎03 86 42 89 98; 8 bd Pasteur; ☺9am-12.30pm & 2-7pm, no midday

IRANCY WINE COUNTRY

Ask locals where they go to taste western Burgundy's wines and many say: **Irancy** (www.irancy.org). This relatively new AOC (1999) predominantly uses a pinot noir grape, and the growing villages are extremely picturesque. Set in rolling hills and spring-blooming cherry orchards, Irancy and nearby **Coulanges-la-Vineuse** lie 13km south of Auxerre. Explore and you'll find many domaines from which to sample. In Irancy you can try **Thierry Richoux** (☎03 86 42 21 60; 73 rue Soufflot), which is converting to all-organic techniques. In Coulanges-la-Vineuse stop by **Clos du Roi** (☎03 86 42 25 72; www.closduroi.com, in French; 17 rue André Vilidieu; tasting and tour €3) or, in the heart of the village, **Domaine Maltoff** (☎03 86 42 32 48; o.maltoff@wanadoo.fr; 20 rue d'Aguesseau; s/d/tr incl breakfast €49/64/79), which is also a B&B.

closure Jul & Aug) A large cooperative cellar founded in 1923, it carries a variety of vintages, including five of Chablis' seven *grands crus*.

Billaud-Simon (☎03 86 42 10 33; 1 quai de Reugny; ☎by appointment) Get off the beaten path to this unpretentious spot on the verdant edge of the canal. Excellent wines represent each of the appellations.

Laroche (☎03 86 42 89 00; www.larochevines.com; 22 rue Louis Bro)

Jean-Marc Brocard (☎03 86 42 45 76; www.brocard.fr; place Charles de Gaulle)

Walking & Cycling WALKS, CYCLING Vineyard walks from Chablis include the **Sentier des Grands Crus** (8km) and the **Sentier des Clos** (13km to 24km, depending on your route). The tourist office sells topoguides (€3).

Cycling is a great way to tour the Chablis countryside. One flat, lush option is the 45km **Chemin de Serein** (www.chemin-serein.com, in French), which follows the old Tacot rail line southeast to Noyers-sur-Serein and L'Isle-sur-Serein. The tourist office hires **bikes** (per 2hr/half/full day €4/7.50/12) from Easter to September.

Sleeping

Hôtel du Vieux Moulin BOUTIQUE HOTEL €€ (☎03 86 42 47 30; www.larochehotel.fr; 18 rue des Moulins; d €125-175, ste €245-270; ☎@☎) In a one-time mill, the five rooms and two suites, understated and very contemporary, afford luscious views of a branch of the Serein. The breakfast room has *grand cru* views. The swank restaurant, Le Wine Bar, is downstairs (*menus* €22 to €38).

Hôtel Le Bergerand's HOTEL €€ (☎03 86 18 96 08; www.chablis-france.fr, in French; 4 rue des Moulins; s €58-92, d €68-112; ☎@☎) This simple rustic hotel with antique wood furniture and cheerful spring colours occupies a one-time coach inn. On weekends breakfast (€7.50) is obligatory.

Eating

La Cuisine Au Vin MODERN FRENCH €€ (☎03 86 18 98 52; 16 rue Auxerroise; lunch menus €17, dinner menus €25-39; ☎lunch Wed-Sun, dinner Wed-Sat) Tuck into exquisitely presented organic meals in a cool 11th-century *cave* highlighted in green neon. An offshoot of the **Defaix winery** (www.chablisdefaix.com), the restaurant sources its ingredients from its own garden patch. Taste wines upstairs with the very knowledgeable Ken Haney.

Le Bistrot des Grands Crus

TRADITIONAL FRENCH €€ (☎03 86 42 19 41; 8-10 rue Jules Rathier; menus €20; ☎closed mid-Jan-mid-Feb) A block southeast of Porte Noël, this relaxed place serves *cuisine du terroir* (cooking that's deeply connected to the land) made with the freshest local ingredients.

Self-Catering

Food market MARKET € (place Charles de Gaulle; ☎8am-1pm Sun)

Les Jardins Européens GROCERY € (11 rue Mar de Latre De Tassigny; ☎8am-12.30pm & 3-7pm Mon-Sat, 8am-12.30pm Sun) Local cheeses and exquisite fruit and veggies.

Petit Casino SUPERMARKET € (rue du Maréchal Leclerc; ☎7.30am-1pm & 3-7.30pm Mon-Sat)

Information

Tourist Office (☎03 86 42 80 80; www.chablis.net; 1 rue du Maréchal de Latre de Tassigny; ☎10am-12.30pm & 1.30-7pm, closed Sun Nov-Mar) Has free English walking-tour booklet and maps of vineyards.

Getting There & Away

Chablis is served by bus (www.rapidesdebourgogne.com) between Auxerre and Tonnerre (Line 4, €2, one per day, Monday to Saturday). The tourist office has schedules.

ABBAYE DE PONTIGNY

TOP CHOICE **Abbaye de Pontigny** (☎03 86 47 54 99; www.abbayedepontigny.eu, in French; ☉9am-7pm), founded in 1114, rises from the lush mustard fields 25km north of Auxerre. The spectacular *abbatiale* (abbey church) is one of the last surviving examples of Cistercian architecture in Burgundy. The simplicity and purity of its white-stone construction reflect the austerity of the Cistercian order (see p401). On summer days sunshine filtering through the high windows creates an amazing sense of peace and tranquillity. *Discovering Pontigny* (€2.50), on sale in the gift shop, points out fascinating architectural details.

The Gothic sanctuary, 108m long and lined with 23 chapels, was built in the mid-12th century; the wooden choir screen, stalls and organ loft were added in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Three archbishops of Canterbury played a role in the history of Pontigny's abbey: Thomas Becket spent the first three years of his exile here (1164-66); Stephen Langton, a refugee from political turmoil in England, lived here for six years (1207-13); and Edmund Rich, who fell ill and died at Soissy in 1240 while on his way to the Vatican, was brought here for burial.

Monks here were the first to perfect the production of Chablis wine. From 1913 to 1922 the church was the site of literary meetings called the *Décades de Pontigny* involving such luminaries as Gide, Sartre and Malraux. In summer there are concerts.

The **tourist office** (☎03 86 47 47 03; <http://pontigny.tourisme.free.fr>; 22 rue Paul Desjardins; ☉10am-12.30pm & 2-5.30pm Mon-Sat or Tue-Sat), across the road, has accommodation information and sells hiking maps.

The **tourist office** (☎03 86 47 47 03; <http://pontigny.tourisme.free.fr>; 22 rue Paul Desjardins; ☉10am-12.30pm & 2-5.30pm Mon-Sat or Tue-Sat), across the road, has accommodation information and sells hiking maps.

TONNERRE

POP 5509

The less-than-prosperous town of Tonnerre, on the Canal de Bourgogne, is best known for its **Hôtel-Dieu** (www.hotel-dieu-tonnerre.com, in French; rue de l'Hôpital; adult/child €4.50/3.50; ☉9am-noon & 2-6pm Mon-Sat, 10am-1.30pm & 2-4.30pm Sun, closed Sun Nov-Mar), a charity hospital founded in 1293 by

Marguerite de Bourgogne, wife of Charles d'Anjou. At the eastern end of the barrel-vaulted patients' hall, near the chapel and Marguerite's tomb, is an extraordinary 15th-century *Entombment of Christ*, carved from a single block of stone.

About 400m west, 200L of water per second gushes from **Fosse Dionne**, a natural spring that was sacred to the Celts and whose blue-green tint hints at its great depth. Legend has it that a serpent lurks at the bottom. The pool is surrounded by a mid-18th-century washing house, a semi-circle of ancient houses and forested slopes.

If you must overnight in Tonnerre try **La Ferme de Fosse Dionne** (☎03 86 54 82 62; www.fermefossedionne.com; 11 rue de la Fosse Dionne; d incl breakfast €65). In a late-18th-century farmhouse overlooking Fosse Dionne, this delightful hostelry has a café and antique shop.

The **tourist office** (☎03 86 55 14 48; www.tonnerre.fr, in French), at the entrance to the Hôtel-Dieu, has a walking-tour brochure and rents bicycles (half-/full day €10/18).

By rail, Tonnerre is linked to Dijon (€16.80, one hour, nine daily) and, via Laroche-Migennes, to Auxerre (€9.70, one hour, eight daily).

CHÂTEAU DE TANLAY

The French Renaissance-style **Château de Tanlay** (☎03 86 75 86 02; adult/child €8/3.50; ☉tours 10am, 11.30am, 2.15pm, 3.15pm, 4.15pm & 5.15pm Wed-Mon, closed mid-Nov-Mar), an elegant product of the 17th century, is surrounded by a wide moat and elaborately carved outbuildings. Interior highlights include the **Grande Galerie**, whose walls and ceiling are completely covered with *trompe l'œil*. Find it 10km east of Tonnerre in the village of Tanlay.

CHÂTEAU D'ANCY-LE-FRANC

The Italian Renaissance makes a cameo appearance at **Château d'Ancy-le-Franc** (☎03 86 75 14 63; www.chateau-ancy.com; adult/child €8/5; ☉tours 10.30am, 11.30am, 2pm, 3pm, 4pm & 5pm Tue-Sun, closed mid-Nov-Mar), built in the 1540s by the celebrated Italian architect Serlio. The richly painted interior, like the 32m-mural in the **Pharsale Gallery**, is mainly the work of Italian artists brought to Fontainebleau by François I. Tours are in French with written English translations.

The château is located 19km southeast of Tonnerre.

BURGUNDY WINE BASICS

Burgundy's epic vineyards extend approximately 258km from Chablis in the north to the Rhône's Beaujolais in the south and comprise 100 AOCs (Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée). Each region has its own appellations and traits, embodied by a concept called *terroir*, the earth imbuing its produce, like grapes, with unique qualities.

In 1878 the vines of Burgundy came near to extinction due to the phylloxera louse, a sap-sucker related to aphids. The solution was to graft French vine varieties to American root stock which were immune to the insect. Governing bodies throughout the region work in rigorous tandem with vintners to assure that common practices are followed to meet AOC standards. Examples include the use of pesticides and fertilisers, pruning styles and the specific yield allowed in each harvest.

Many aficionados spend a lifetime studying and enjoying the myriad vintages – which depend on *cépage* (grape variety), weather, yield, vinicultural practices and *élevage* (the process for caring for the wine following vinification).

Burgundy's wines are celebrated each year at the **Festival Musical des Grands Crus de Bourgogne** (☎03 80 34 38 40; www.bourgogne-tourisme.com; ☀Jun-Sep), which features 40 concerts and wine events throughout the region.

For more on wine, see p931.

Here's an ever-so-brief survey of some of Burgundy's major growing regions:

Côte d'Or vineyards The northern section, the **Côte de Nuits**, stretches from Marsannay-la-Côte south to Corgoloin and produces reds known for their robust, full-bodied character. The southern section, the **Côte de Beaune**, lies between Ladoix-Serrigny and Santenay and produces great reds and great whites. Appellations from the area's hilltops are the **Hautes-Côtes de Nuits** and **Hautes-Côtes de Beaune**.

Chablis Four renowned chardonnay white wine appellations from 20 villages around Chablis.

Châtillonnais Approximately 20 villages around Châtillon-sur-Seine producing red and white wines.

Côte Chalonnaise The southernmost continuation of the Côte de Beaune's slopes, the region also produces *Crémant de Bourgogne*, a light sparkling white or rosé.

Irancy Part of the **Auxerrois vineyards**, producing excellent pinot noir reds.

Mâconnais Known for rich or fruity white wines, like the Pouilly-Fuissé chardonnay.

NOYERS-SUR-SEREIN

POP 744

The absolutely picturesque medieval village of Noyers (pronounced 'nwa-yair'), 30km southeast of Auxerre, is surrounded by rolling pastureland, wooded hills and a sharp bend in the River Serein. Stone ramparts and fortified battlements enclose much of the village and, between the two imposing stone gateways, cobbled streets lead past 15th- and 16th-century gabled houses, wood and stone archways and several art galleries.

Lines carved into the facade of the 18th-century **mairie** (town hall), next to the library, mark the level of historic floods. Diagonally across the street is the **tourist office** (☎03 86 82 66 06; www.noyers-sur-serein.com; 22 place de l'Hôtel de Ville; ☀10am-1pm & 2-6pm, closed Sun Oct-May).

Noyers is a superb base for walking. Just outside the clock-topped southern gate, Chemin des Fossés leads eastwards to the River Serein and a **streamside walk** around the village's 13th-century **fortifications**, 19 of whose original 23 towers are extant. The 9km **Balade du Château**, trail-marked in red, follows the Serein's right bank past the utterly ruined château just north of Noyers. You can walk or cycle the **Chemin de Serein** (www.chemin-serein.com, in French) between here and Chablis.

Among the town's quirky galleries is **Création Maroquinerie** (27 rue de la Petite Étape aux Vins; ☀Tue-Sun), a fantastic leather shop full of chic belts and supple handbags. The proprietors, Yazmihl and Brice, do custom work and make everything on site, sometimes using bison hide. Another inter-

Want to Know More?

Château du Clos de Vougeot (☎03 80 62 86 09; www.tastevin-bourgogne.com; Vougeot; adult/child €3.90/2.90; ☀9am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, to 5pm Sat, closed 25 Dec-Jan) provides a wonderful introduction to Burgundy's winemaking techniques. Originally the property of the Abbaye de Cîteaux, the 16th-century country castle served as a getaway for the abbots. The 12th-century farm buildings were the nexus of the early development of winemaking methods. The Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin (a group dedicated to the promulgation of Burgundian wines and traditions) conducts tours that are choc-full of interesting winemaking facts and offer a chance to discover the workings of enormous ancient wine presses and casks.

Tourist offices provide brochures including *The Burgundy Wine Road* and a useful map, *Roadmap to the Wines of Burgundy* (€0.50). A handy website is www.bourgogne-wines.com.

Lots of books are available at Beaune's Athenaeum de la Vigne et du Vin (p408). Look for these:

- » *Burgundy* by Anthony Hanson
- » *Côte d'Or: A Celebration of the Great Wines of Burgundy* by Clive Coates
- » *The Wines of Burgundy* by Sylvain Pitiot and Jean-Charles Servant (excellent overview)
- » *Everything There Is To Know About Burgundy Wines* (concise, easy-to-use introduction to Burgundy's 100 appellations)
- » *Wine and War* by Don and Petie Kladstrupe (the tale of France's wine and vintners during WWII)

Or take a class!

École des Vins de Bourgogne

(☎03 80 26 35 10; www.ecoledesvins-bourgogne.com; 6 rue du 16e Chasseurs, Beaune) Offers a variety of courses (from a two-hour fundamentals class for €40 to a full weekend course for €365) to refine your vinicultural vocabulary as well as your palate.

Sensation Vin

(☎03 80 22 17 57; www.sensation-vin.com; 1 rue d'Enfer, Beaune; ☀10am-7pm) Offers introductory tasting sessions (no appointment needed) as well as tailor-made courses.

esting spot is Diane Calvert's **illuminated painting studio** (47 rue de la Petite Étape aux Vins) where she grinds her own pigments from semiprecious stones and uses parchment and quill pens.

Moulin de la Roche (☎03 86 82 68 13; www.bonadresse.com/bourgogne/le-moulin-de-la-roche.htm; rte d'Auxerre; s incl breakfast €58, d €67-75, q €105; 🍷) sits on three gorgeous hectares over the River Serein. A renovated mill, it has two beautiful guestrooms and a millwheel in the living room.

La Vieille Tour (☎03 86 82 87 69; fax 03 86 82 66 04; place du Grenier à Sel; d incl breakfast €55-70, q €80-90; ☀Apr-Sep; 🍷), in a rambling 17th-century house, has five simply furnished *chambres d'hôte*, loads of local colour and a lovely garden. It is run by a Dutch art historian who promises a warm

welcome but adds, 'I cannot guarantee I have no spiderwebs'.

Noyers has a couple of **grocery shops** and a **weekly market** (☀Wed morning). Four young brothers run the outstanding **Maison Paillot** (☎03 86 82 82 16; www.maison-paillot.com; place de l'Hôtel de Ville; lunch menus €32; ☀shop & wine cellar Tue-Sun, closed Feb, restaurant lunch Tue-Sun, dinner Tue-Sat, closed Jan-Mar) and combine a charcuterie/deli/cave with an excellent restaurant, Les Millésimes. Or try the simple, delicious meals at **Restaurant de la Vieille Tour** (☎03 86 82 87 36; rue Porte Peinte; menus €14.50-22; ☀lunch Sat-Wed, dinner Fri-Wed, closed Oct-Mar; 🍷🍷). Dishes often have an exotic twist and vegetarian options are available.

Avallon

POP 7743

The once-strategic walled town of Avallon, on a picturesque hilltop overlooking the green terraced slopes of two River Cousin tributaries, was in centuries past a stop on the coach road from Paris to Lyon. At its most animated during the Saturday morning market, the city makes a good base for exploring Vézelay and the Parc Naturel Régional du Morvan.

Sights & Activities

The old city is built on a triangular granite hilltop with ravines to the east and west. The main commercial thoroughfares are rue de Paris and rue de Lyon, outside the city walls, and the old city's Grande Rue Aristide Briand, spanned by **Tour de l'Horloge**, a solid, 15th-century clock tower.

Musée de l'Avallonnais

MUSEUM

(☎03 86 34 03 19; place de la Collégiale; ☎2-6pm Wed-Mon Jul-Sep) Founded in 1862, this wonderful small museum displays religious art including some fine Romanesque examples. Other highlights include a series of expressionist watercolours by Georges Rouault (1871-1958) and an excellent art deco silver collection by renowned designer and jeweller Jean Després (1889-1980).

Collégiale St-Lazare

CHURCH

(rue Bocquillot) Eight centuries ago masses of pilgrims flocked here thanks to a piece of the skull of St Lazarus, believed to provide protection from leprosy. The early-12th-century church once had three portals but one was crushed when the northern belfry came a-tumblin' down in 1633; the two remaining portals are grandly decorated in Romanesque style, though much of the carving has been damaged. Summertime art exhibitions are held next door in Église St-Pierre and across the street in the 18th-century Grenier à Sel (Salt Store).

Walking & Cycling

WALKS, CYCLING

A pathway descends from the ancient gateway **Petite Porte**, affording fine views over the Vallée du Cousin. You can walk around the walls, with their 15th- to 18th-century towers, ramparts and bastions.

For a bucolic walk or bike ride in the **Vallée du Cousin**, take the shaded, one-lane D427, which follows the gentle rapids of the River Cousin through dense forests and lush meadows. The tourist office sells hiking

maps (eg IGN 2722 ET) and has information on Parc Naturel Régional du Morvan.

Sleeping

AVALLON

Hôtel Les Capucins

HOTEL €

(☎03 86 34 06 52; www.avallonlescapucins.com; 6 av Paul Doumer; d €50, 8-person ste €130; ☎@☎) This spotless budget place sits on a quiet, plum-lined sidestreet. Comfortable rooms are decorated with all manner of butterflies.

Hôtel d'Avallon Vauban

HOTEL €

(☎03 86 34 36 99; www.avallonvaubanhotel.com; 53 rue de Paris; s/d €55/61, studio €90; ☎@☎) *Trompe l'œil* trees decorate the facade, real trees fill the private garden, and tidy, spacious rooms and studio apartments have simple furnishings. Parking €2.

VALLÉE DU COUSIN

Le Moulin des Ruats

HISTORIC HOTEL €€

(☎03 86 34 97 00; www.moulin-des-ruats.com; D427; d €82-154; ☎closed 15 Nov-20 Feb; ☎) This very romantic former flour mill sits in a gorgeous wooded spot right on the river and has a ravishing waterside terrace. Impeccable rooms come with antique-style furnishings and some have little balconies. Fantastic views from rooms 4 and 12.

DON'T MISS

LA CIMENTELLE

La Cimentelle (☎03 86 31 04 85; <http://lacimentelle.com>, in French; 2 rue de la Cimentelle, Vassy-lès-Avallon; s incl breakfast €75-90, d €80-95, tr €140; ☎@☎) is a welcoming B&B operated by hosts Stéphane and Nathalie, who retired from life in Lyon to renovate her family estate in the countryside. Situated on shady, extensive grounds 6km north of Avallon, the château houses luxuriously appointed rooms, each one a bit different. One favourite, Hippolyte, has a freestanding claw-foot tub in front of a fireplace. Three-bedroom family apartments (€140 to €210) are fantastic. Do not skip the *repas* (€32 with wine): Nathalie is a gourmet chef and every meal is a sumptuous delight. The swimming pool sits spectacularly atop the ruins of an old cement factory.

(☎03 86 34 10 39; campingsousroche@ville-avallon.fr; sites per adult/tent/car €3.20/2.50/2.50; ☼Apr-mid-Oct) A woody, well-maintained site 2km southeast of the old city on the forested banks of the Cousin. Has a play structure, RV hook-ups (€5) and wastewater disposal.

Le Moulin des Templiers

HOTEL €€

(☎03 86 34 10 80; www.hotel-moulin-des-templiers.com; 10 rte de Cousin, D427, Pontaubert; d €69-78; ☼closed Jan) This converted mill's bedrooms, with country furnishings, are a bit small but there's a delightful terrace next to the rushing river.



Eating & Drinking

Le Gourmillon

BURGUNDIAN €€

(☎03 86 31 62 01; 8 rue de Lyon; lunch menus €11, dinner menus €15-36; ☼lunch daily, dinner Mon-Sat; ♿) This low-key cheerfully colourful place, popular with locals, serves up French and Burgundian dishes. Desserts are delicious. Kids' menu €8.

Hôtel Les Capucins

BURGUNDIAN €€

(☎03 86 34 06 52; 6 av Paul Doumer; menus €14-36) Canvases by local artists adorn the walls of this elegant restaurant. An excellent place to try *sauce Morvandelle* (made with shallots, mustard and white wine), for instance with Charolais beef.

Dame Jeanne

TEA HOUSE €

(☎03 86 34 58 71; 59 Grand rue Aristide Briand; ☼8am-7pm Fri-Wed) Folks come from the countryside for delicious lunches or special pastry treats in the garden or 17th-century salon.

Self-Catering

Saturday Market

MARKET €

(place des Odebert ☼until 1pm Sat) Enormous weekly market.

Thursday Market

MARKET €

(place du Général de Gaulle; ☼Thu morning)

Auchan

SUPERMARKET €

(rue du Général Leclerc; ☼8.30am-9pm Mon-Sat)



Information

Tourist office (☎03 86 34 14 19; www.avallon.nais-tourisme.com; 6 rue Bocquillot; internet per 30min €2, wi-fi free) ☼9am-7pm, closed Sun mid-Sep-mid-Jun) Also has internet access.



Getting There & Away

BUS Transco (☎08 00 10 20 04) buses leave from the train station to Dijon (€20, two hours,

DON'T MISS

AUBERGE DU POT D'ETAIN

You wouldn't necessarily expect to find a gastronomic gem in the modest village of L'Isle-sur-Serein, halfway between Avallon and Noyers-sur-Serein. But then there is **Auberge du Pot d'Étain** (☎03 86 33 88 10; www.potdetain.com, in French; rue Bouchardot, L'Isle-sur-Serein; r €60-90, menus €26-52; ☼noon-1.30pm Wed-Sun, dinner Mon-Sat, Tue-Sun Jul-Aug), beating all the odds. Delicacies include a brochette of escargot tempura, pigeon in chartreuse and foie gras, and other unlikely surprises. The wine list is epic.

two or three daily), Auxerre and Autun. In July and August there are sometimes services to Vézelay.

TRAIN Trains serve the following destinations:

Autun €18, two hours, one daily

Auxerre €13, 1¼ hours, three daily

Dijon €28, two to 2½ hours, two daily

Paris Gare de Lyon or Gare de Bercy €40, three hours, three daily

Sermizelles-Vézelay €11, 20 minutes, three daily



Getting Around

Parking in Avallon is free but in places marked with blue lines you must place a timer *disque* (disc; €2 at tobacconists) in the window to demonstrate compliance with the 1½-hour time limit.

BICYCLE Bikes can be hired from the **tourist office** (per hr/day €4/10) and **Gueneau** (☎03 86 34 28 11; 26 rue de Paris; half-day/full day/2 days €8/16/28; ☼8am-noon & 2-6pm Tue-Sat).

PARC NATUREL RÉGIONAL DU MORVAN

The 2990-sq-km Morvan Regional Park, bounded more or less by Vézelay, Avallon, Saulieu and Autun and straddling Burgundy's four *départements* (with the majority in the Nièvre), encompasses 700 sq km of dense woodland, 13 sq km of lakes and vast expanses of rolling farmland broken by hedgerows, stone walls and stands of beech, hornbeam and oak. The sharp-

eyed can observe some of France's largest and most majestic birds of prey perched on trees as they scan for field rodents.

Sights & Activities

The Morvan (a Celtic name meaning 'Black Mountain') offers an abundance of options to fans of outdoor activities. On dry land choose from rambling (the park has over 2500km of marked trails), mountain biking, horse riding, rock climbing, orienteering and fishing. You can raft, canoe and kayak on several lakes and the Chalaux, Cousin, Cure and Yonne Rivers.

In addition to AB Loisirs (p424), the following outfits rent bikes and arrange water sports:

Activital (www.activital.net, in French) Lac de Chaumeçon (☎03 86 22 61 35; St-Martin-du-Puy); Lac des Settons (☎03 86 84 51 98; Montsauche-les-Settons)

Okheanos (☎03 86 84 60 61; www.okheanos.com, in French; Dun-les-Places)

Morvan Visitors Centre PARK CENTRE
(Espace St-Brisson; ☎03 86 78 79 57; www.parcumorvan.org, in French; ☺tourist office 9.30am-12.30pm & 2-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-12.30pm & 2-5pm Sat, 10am-1pm & 3-5.30pm Sun, closed Sat & Sun mid-Nov-Easter) Surrounded by hills, forests and lakes, Espace St-Brisson is a clearinghouse of park information, including hiking and cycling maps and guides. To get there by car, follow the signs to the 'Maison du Parc' 14km west of Saulieu to St-Brisson. The website has details of local festivals, outdoor activities and lodging.

Guided walks (€4 to €10) of the park, some at night (eg to observe owls), set out from April to October, and there are children's activities in July and August.

Trails passing through St-Brisson include three 5km circuits (Coteaux de St-Brisson, Autour de la Maison du Parc and Autour du Vignan), a 12km circuit to Dolmen Chevresse and a 20km circuit to the village of Gouloux.

The **Verger Conservatoire** (Conservation Orchard) preserves some 200 varieties of legacy fruit trees that are no longer commercially grown; the **Herbularium** features 170 species of Morvan plants.

Other useful (though not always up-to-date) websites include www.morvan-tourisme.org and www.patrimoinedumorvan.org, both in French.

Écomusée du Morvan

CULTURAL CENTRES

(☎03 86 78 79 10) Six sites around the park explore traditional Morvan life and customs, including one at Espace St-Brisson. There the **Maison des Hommes et des Paysages** (adult/child €3/2; ☺10am-1pm & 2-6pm, closed 15 Nov-Mar, also Sat morning & Tue except Jul & Aug) has displays in French on the interplay between humans and landscapes. Also, since the Morvan was a major stronghold for the Resistance during WWII, the **Musée de la Résistance en Morvan** (adult/child €4/2.50, audioguide €1) chronicles key events and characters.

Another site, **La Maison Vauban** (☎03 86 32 26 30; www.vaubanecomusee.org; 4 place Vauban; adult/child €5/1; ☺10am-1pm & 2.30-6.30pm Wed-Sun, weekends only Apr-May & Oct-Nov, closed 15 Nov-Mar) in St-Léger-Vauban, is the birthplace of field marshal Sébastien Le Prestre, Marquis of Vauban (1633-1707), and celebrates his life and work. A brilliant military strategist whose methods remained in use for hundreds of years, he is well known for his fortifications, many still extant, and his publications on everything from fair taxes to forest preservation.

Maquis Bernard Résistance Cemetery

HISTORIC CEMETERY

(www.ouroux-en-morvan.com) Seven RAF men (the crew of a bomber shot down near here in 1944) and 21 *résistants* are buried in this neatly tended cemetery surrounded by the dense forests in which British paratroops operated with Free French forces. The nearby drop zone is marked with signs.

The cemetery is about 8km southwest of Montsauche-les-Settons (along the D977) and 5.6km east of Oroux-en-Morvan (along the D12), near the hamlet of Savelot. From the D977, go 2.8km along the narrow dirt road to Savelot.

Vézelay

POP 486

Despite the hordes of tourists who descend on Vézelay, this tiny hilltop village – a Unesco World Heritage Site – is one of France's architectural gems. Perched on a rocky spur crowned by a medieval basilica and surrounded by a sublime patchwork of vineyards, sunflower fields and cows, Vézelay seems to have been lifted from another age.

One of the main pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela in Spain starts

here (see www.amis-saint-jacques-de-com-postelle.asso.fr; in French).

History

Thanks to the relics of St Mary Magdalene, Vézelay's Benedictine monastery became an important pilgrimage site in the 11th and 12th centuries. St Bernard, leader of the Cistercian order, preached the Second Crusade here in 1146. King Philip Augustus of France and King Richard the Lionheart of England met up here in 1190 before setting out on the Third Crusade.

Vézelay's vineyards, founded in Gallo-Roman times, were wiped out in the late 1800s by phylloxera and were only re-established in 1973.

Sights

Vézelay has long attracted artists and writers. About half a dozen **art galleries** and several wine and crafts shops line rue St-Pierre and rue St-Étienne. For four days in late July the town gets swept up in exhibitions, craft workshops and theatre during the **Vézelay S'Enflamme festival**.

Basilique Ste-Madeleine LANDMARK CHURCH

Founded in the 880s AD on a former Roman and then Carolingian site, Basilique Ste-Madeleine has had a turbulent history. Rebuilt between the 11th and 13th centuries, it was trashed by the Huguenots in 1569, desecrated during the Revolution and, to top off the human ravages, repeatedly struck by lightning. By the mid-1800s it was on the point of collapse. In 1840 the architect Viollet-le-Duc undertook the daunting task of rescuing the structure. His work, which included reconstructing the western facade and its doorways, helped Vézelay, previously a ghost town, spring back to life.

On the famous 12th-century **tympanum**, visible from the narthex (enclosed porch), Romanesque carvings show Jesus seated on a throne, radiating his holy spirit to the Apostles. The **nave**, rebuilt follow-



ing the great fire of 1120, has round arches and detailed capitals, typical features of the Romanesque style; the **transept and choir** (1185) have ogival arches, hallmarks of Gothic architecture. Under the transept a mid-12th-century **crypt** houses a reliquary containing what is believed to be one of Mary Magdalene's bones.

Visitors are welcome to observe prayers or Mass. Concerts of sacred music are held in the nave from June to September; the tourist office and its website have details. Occasional tours of the church are also conducted.



Musée Zervos



ART MUSEUM

( 03 86 32 39 26; www.musee-zervos.fr; in French; rue St-Étienne; adult/child €3/free;  10am-6pm Wed-Mon mid-Mar-mid-Nov, daily Jul & Aug) This fantastic museum in the exquisite town house of Nobel Prize-winning pacifist writer Romain Rolland (1866-1944) holds the collection of Christian Zervos (1889-1970), the founder of the art journal *Les Cahiers d'Art*. An art critic, gallerist and friend of many modern art luminaries, he and his wife, Yvonne, collected paintings, sculptures and mobiles by Calder, Giacometti, Kandinsky, Léger, Mirò and Picasso (for whom he created a pivotal 22-volume catalogue). Many works were gifts or payment from the artists.



Maison Jules Roy

HISTORIC HOME

( 03 86 33 35 10;  2-6pm Wed-Sun, 2-5pm Mon, closed Oct-Mar) At the upper end of rue des Écoles, the house of Jules Roy (1907-2000) sits in the shadow of the basilica. Walk around his beautiful gardens and see the Algerian-born writer's study.



Activities

Walking Trails

WALKS

The **park** behind the basilica affords wonderful views of the Vallée de Cure and nearby villages. A dirt road leads north to the old and new **cemeteries**. **Promenade des**

BURGUNDY TO THE MOON

In 1971 the astronauts of NASA's Apollo 15 moon mission named one of the lunar craters they found 'St George' in honour of the bottle of Nuits-St-Georges consumed on the way to the moon in Jules Verne's sci-fi epic, *From the Earth to the Moon* (1865):

And lastly, to crown the repast, Ardan had brought out a fine bottle of Nuits, which was found 'by chance' in the provision-box. The three friends drank to the union of the earth and her satellite.

Fossés circumnavigates Vézelay's medieval ramparts. A footpath with fine views of the basilica links Porte Neuve, on the northern side of the ramparts, with the village of **Asquins** (pronounced 'ah-kah') and the River Cure. The GR13 trail passes by Vézelay.

AB Loisirs

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

(03 86 33 38 38; www.abloisirs.com, in French; rte du Camping; 9.30am-6pm Jul & Aug, phone ahead rest of year) AB Loisirs, whose base is a few kilometres southeast in St-Père, rents bikes (€25 per day) and leads outdoor activities like kayak trips (8/18km from €19/33), rafting (€44), cave exploration (half-day €37) and horse riding (from €17). Bikes can be brought to your hotel. It's best to phone ahead.



Sleeping

Book ahead.

Les Glycines

HISTORIC HOTEL €€

(03 86 32 35 30; www.glycines-vezelay.com; rue St-Pierre; s €37, d €69-89; closed mid-Nov-Easter; ☎) A 1763 bourgeois townhouse built and enveloped in ancient wisteria is now a hotel that's overflowing with old-fashioned character. Hexagonal floor tiles and wooden beams haven't changed in generations. The 11 rooms are all named after famous artists; 'Paul Claudet' is the one to get.

Cabalus

HISTORIC HOTEL €

(03 86 33 20 66; www.cabalus.com; rue St-Pierre; d €38-58) Upstairs and down the hall from the interesting café, these simple but character-filled rooms are right next to the cathedral, in its ancient *hôtellerie*.

Centre Ste-Madeleine

HOSTEL €

(03 86 33 22 14; fax 03 86 33 22 14; rue St-Pierre; dm/d €11/40; reception closed lunch-time) Very basic 38-bed hostel, set around an ancient stone courtyard and run by three with-it Franciscan nuns. Sheet hire (€5) and kitchen available.

Hôtel Le Compostelle

HOTEL €

(03 86 33 28 63; www.lecompostellevezelay.com; 1 place du Champ-de-Foire; d €56-64, tr/q €76/86; closed Jan-mid-Feb; ☎☎☎) Eighteen spotless, practical rooms afford romantic views of either the valley or the village.

Hôtel du Cheval Blanc

HOTEL €

(03 86 33 22 12; fax 03 86 33 34 29; place du Champ-de-Foire; s/d/tr €38/42/46; closed mid-Jan-mid-Feb, reception closed 3.30-6pm

except Jul & Aug) Six neat, no-frills rooms above the restaurant.



Eating

Le Cheval Blanc

TRADITIONAL FRENCH €€

(03 86 33 22 12; place du Champ-de-Foire; menus €28-30; closed dinner Wed & Thu except Jul & Aug) It's an understated spot, but the cuisine is delectable, made with fresh seasonal ingredients, mixing traditional recipes and *nouvelle* ideas. Reserve ahead.

Le Bougainville

TRADITIONAL FRENCH €€

(03 86 33 27 57; 26 rue St-Etienne; menus €22-29; ☎Thu-Mon; ☎) The smiling owner serves rich French and Burgundian specialties like crispy green salad with hot *chèvre* or escargots. Save room for the fantastic chocolate fondant and homemade pistachio ice cream.

Les Glycines

TRADITIONAL FRENCH €€

(03 86 32 35 30; rue St-Pierre; menus €19-24; lunch Fri-Wed, dinner varies, closed mid-Nov-Easter) Expect casual, hearty portions of homestyle French food using fresh regional products. Check the chalkboard under the wisteria to see which nights dinner is available.

Cabalus

CAFÉ €

(rue St-Pierre; dishes €5; 11am-6pm Wed-Sun) Crammed with character under ancient arches, this mellow café displays art and serves quiche and sandwiches.

Vival

SUPERMARKET €

(rue St-Étienne; 8am-1pm & 3-8pm Mon-Sat, plus 9.30am-1pm Sun mid-Sep-mid-May)



Information

Tourist office (03 86 33 23 69; www.vezelay-tourisme.com; 12 rue St-Étienne; 10am-1pm & 2-6pm, closed Thu Oct-May & Sun Nov-Easter) Sells hiking maps and has internet (€2 per 10 minutes).



Getting There & Away

Vézelay is 15km from Avallon (19km if you take the gorgeous D427 via Pontaubert). There's a free car park 250m from place du Champ-de-Foire (towards Clamecy).

BUS In July and August there are sometimes buses to Avallon. Check with the tourist office.

TRAIN Three trains a day link the Sermizelles-Vézelay train station, about 10km north of Vézelay, with Avallon (€11, 15 minutes) and Auxerre (€11, one hour).

TAXI Call 03 86 32 31 88 or 03 86 33 19 06. From Sermizelles-Vézelay train station to

Vézelay costs about €18 (€24 after 7pm and on Sunday).

Around Vézelay

Southeast of Vézelay at the base of the hill, **St-Père** has a Flamboyant Gothic church.

TOP CHOICE **L'Espérance** (☎03 86 33 39 10; www.marc-meneau.com; r €120-450; lunch menus €57, dinner menus €150-210; ☺lunch Thu-Sun, dinner Wed-Mon; ☺☺), Marc Meneau's legendary French restaurant (and 30-room hotel) with two Michelin stars, however, steals the show. Surrounded by tranquil private gardens, the inn has flawless service and a mood of refined elegance.

Three kilometres south along the D958, the **Fontaines Salées** (☎03 86 33 26 62; adult/child €4/1.60; ☺10am-12.30pm & 1.30-6.30pm, closed 11 Nov-Mar) are saltwater springs that were the site of a neolithic development and then a Celtic sanctuary (2nd century BC) and Roman baths (1st century AD). Tickets allow access to **Le Musée Archéologique** (☺same as Fontaines Salées) in St-Père, which holds finds from the site.

About 2km south, the village of **Pierre-Perthuis** (literally 'pierced stone') is named after a natural stone arch; nearby, a graceful stone bridge (1770) spans the River Cure underneath a modern highway bridge. The neighbouring hamlet of Soevres is home to **Les Chênevières** (☎03 86 32 37 80; www.chenevieres-soevres.com; 48 Grand Rue, C5; s incl breakfast €56-77, d €63-84, house per week €430; ☺) with cosy rooms, extensive grounds along a stream and nearby walking paths.

Le Château de Bazoches (☎03 86 22 10 22; www.chateau-bazoches.com; adult/child €7.50/4; ☺9.30am-noon & 2.15-6pm, no midday closure Jul & Aug, closed mid-Nov-25 Mar) in Bazoches, sits magnificently on a hillside with views to Vézelay 12km to the north. Built in the 13th century and visited by royalty including Richard the Lionheart, it was acquired by field marshal and military strategist Marquis de Vauban in 1675. It is still owned by his descendants.

Bibracte

TOP CHOICE **Bibracte** (☺archaeological sites Jun-Oct), the sprawling archaeological remains of a Celtic city, sits atop beautiful **Mont Beuvray**, 25km west of Autun. Bibracte was the capital of the Celtic Aedui

people during the 1st and 2nd centuries BC, and it was here, in 52 BC, that Vercingétorix was declared chief of the Gaulish coalition shortly before his defeat by Julius Caesar at Alésia. Caesar also resided here before the city decamped to Augustodunum (Autun). The site is covered with 1000 hectares of forest, blessed with expansive views and criss-crossed by **walking trails**, including the GR13. Stone remnants include ancient ramparts and several complexes of buildings, all in varying states of excavation.

The excellent **Museum of Celtic Civilisation** (☎03 85 86 52 35; www.bibracte.fr; adult/child incl audioguide €5.75/free; ☺10am-6pm mid-Mar-mid-Nov, to 7pm Jul & Aug) is housed in an impressive minimalist building designed by Pierre-Louis Faloci. Exhibits explain the technologies, like a sophisticated system of ramparts, and culture of the Celtic Gauls throughout Europe and also display finds from the site. During the high season there are guided tours (in English on Mondays at 2.30pm) and lecture/workshop programs. A Zen-feeling café provides set meals (€16) and picnic baskets (€7 per person).

SAÔNE-ET-LOIRE

In the southern Saône-et-Loire *département* (www.bourgogne-du-sud.com), midway between Dijon and Lyon, highlights include the Gallo-Roman ruins in Autun, Cluny's glorious Romanesque heritage and, around Mâcon, vineyards galore. Several rivers and the Canal du Centre meander among its forests and pastureland.

Autun

POP 16,310

Autun is now a low-key town, but almost two millennia ago (known as Augustodunum) it was one of the most important cities in Roman Gaul, boasting 6km of ramparts, four monumental gates, two theatres, an amphitheatre and a system of aqueducts. Beginning in AD 269, the city was repeatedly sacked by barbarian tribes and its fortunes declined, but things improved considerably in the Middle Ages, making it possible to construct an impressive cathedral. The hilly area around Cathédrale St-Lazare, reached via narrow cobblestone streets, is known as the old city.

If you have a car, Autun is an excellent base for exploring the southern parts of the Parc Naturel Régional du Morvan.

Sights & Activities

Napoléon Bonaparte and his brothers Joseph and Lucien studied in Autun as teenagers. Their old Jesuit college is now a high school called **Lycée Joseph Bonaparte**, on the west side of Champ de Mars. A small **train** (adult/child €6/3) offers guided town tours in July and August; contact the tourist office.

TOP CHOICE **Cathédrale St-Lazare** CATHEDRAL
(place du Terreau; ☺8am-7pm Sep-Jun, plus 9-11pm Jul & Aug) Originally Romanesque, this cathedral was built in the 12th century to house the sacred relics of St Lazarus. Later additions include the 15th- to 16th-century **bell tower** over the transept and the 19th-century towers over the entrance. Over the main doorway, the famous Romanesque **tympanum** shows the Last Judgement carved in the 1130s by Gislebertus, whose name is inscribed below Jesus' right foot. Look for all manner of symbolism: signs of the zodiac encircling the saved and the damned. Be sure to go upstairs to the **Chapter Room** where the fantastical capitals, many of them by Gislebertus, are displayed.

Musée Rolin MUSEUM
(☺03 85 52 09 76; 5 rue des Bancs; adult/child €4/free; ☺9.30am-noon & 1.30-6pm Wed-Mon) Explore a worthwhile collection of Gallo-Roman artefacts; 12th-century Romanesque art, including the *Temptation of Eve* by Gislebertus; and 15th-century paintings such as the *Autun Virgin* by the Maître de Moulins. Modern art includes work by Maurice Denis, Jean Dubuffet and Joan Miro.

The adjacent **prison** (2bis place St-Louis; admission €1; ☺2-6pm Wed-Sun Jul-Sep), a forbidding circular structure built in 1854, was used until 1955.


Gallo-Roman Sites ANCIENT RUINS
Built during the reign of Constantine, **Porte d'Arroux** was once one of Augustodunum's four gates. Constructed wholly without mortar, it supports four semicircular arches of the sort that put the 'Roman' in Romanesque: two for vehicles and two for pedestrians. **Porte St-André** is similar in general design.

Let your imagination run wild at the **Théâtre Romain** (Roman Theatre; ☺24hr), de-

signed to hold 16,000 people; try picturing the place filled with cheering (or jeering), toga-clad spectators. From the top look southwest to see the **Pierre de Couhard** (Rock of Couhard), the 27m-high remains of a Gallo-Roman pyramid that was probably a tomb.

Long associated (wrongly) with the Roman god Janus, the 24m-high **Temple de Janus** (www.temple-de-janus.net, in French), in the middle of farmland 800m north of the train station, is thought to have been a site for Celtic worship. Only two of its massive walls still stand.

Walking & Cycling WALKS, CYCLING
For a stroll along the city walls (part-Roman but mostly medieval), walk from av du Morvan south to the 12th-century **Tour des Ursulines** and follow the walls to the northeast. The Chemin des Manies leads out to the Pierre de Couhard, where you can pick up the **Circuit des Gorges**, three marked forest trails ranging from 4.7km to 11.5km (map IGN 2925 O). **Espace Sport et Nature** (☺03 85 52 47 09; rte de Chalon) rents bikes (€21 per two hours) and kayaks (€7.50 per hour).

 **Sleeping**
TOP CHOICE **Maison Sainte-Barbe** B&B €
(☺03 85 86 24 77; www.maisonsainte-barbe.com, in French; 7 place Sainte-Barbe; s/d incl breakfast €60/65) Smack in the old city in a 15th-century townhouse, around a verdant courtyard, some of the rooms of this colourful, spotless B&B have light-filled views of the cathedral. Friendly, knowledgeable owners prepare delicious breakfasts.

Hôtel de France HOTEL €
(☺03 85 52 14 00; www.hotel-de-france-autun.fr; 18 av de la République; d €41) A cheery family-run hostelry with 26 basic, clean rooms, across from the train station.

Hôtel St-Louis et de la Poste HOTEL €€
(☺03 85 52 01 01; www.hotelsaintlouis.net; 6 rue de l'Arbalète; d €99-119; ☺) In a grand 17th-century building that hosted Napoléon no fewer than four times, this 39-room establishment has a lavish 1920s lobby. Book ahead.

Hôtel de la Tête Noire HOTEL €€
(☺03 85 86 59 99; www.hoteltetenoire.fr; 3 rue de l'Arquebuse; d/tr €74/85; ☺closed Jan; ☺☺) Straightforward rooms, some quite large, and a good restaurant.

CHÂTEAU DE VILLETTE

Set in a 5-sq-km private estate, the delightful 16th- and 18th-century **Château de Villette** (☎03 86 30 09 13; www.stork-chateau.com; d incl breakfast €135-235, ste €295-365; 📍) offers the luxurious life of Burgundy's landed aristocracy. After waking up in a ravishingly furnished period room, you can ramble, cycle or hunt escargots in the rolling countryside. Situated 20km southwest of Autun; take the N81, then the D192 for 3km to just beyond Poil, then the C1 for 2km. Call ahead.



Eating

Find restaurants along the north side of Champ de Mars and towards the cathedral, along Grande Rue Chauchien and Petite Rue Chauchien and around place du Terreau.

Restaurant Le Chapitre

TRADITIONAL FRENCH €€

(☎03 85 52 04 01; 11 place du Terreau; menus €28-37; ☀noon-1.30pm Tue-Sun, 7.30-9.30pm Tue-Sat) The intimate dining room in brushed-grey tones fills up with locals out for a quiet, elegant meal. Treats include roasted sole with artichoke mousse. Kids' menu €15. Reserve ahead.

Le Chalet Bleu

MODERN FRENCH €€

(☎03 85 86 27 30; 3 rue Jeannin; menus €16.50-58; ☀lunch Wed-Mon, dinner Wed-Sat) Serves creative French gastronomic cuisine in a light, leafy dining room. Specialities include *meurette d'œufs pochés et escargots* (poached eggs with red-wine reduction and escargots) and thick Charolais steaks. Take-away plates sold next door.

La Trattoria

PIZZERIA €

(☎03 85 86 10 73; 2 rue des Bancs; pizzas €12; ☀Tue-Sun) Organic pizzas near the cathedral.

Food Market

MARKET €

(Hôtel de Ville; ☀until 12.30pm Wed & Fri)

Petit Casino

SUPERMARKET €

(6 av Charles de Gaulle; ☀7.30am-12.30pm & 3-8pm Tue-Sat, 8.30am-12.30pm & 4-7pm Sun)



Entertainment

Bowling du Lac (☎03 85 52 06 06; www.bowling-autun.com, in French; rte de Chalon-sur-Saône;

☀11am-2am Tue-Thu, 11am-4am Fri, 3pm-4am Sat, 3pm-2am Sun), 2.5km east of the old city next to the McDonald's, is hugely popular with locals of all ages. It has eight bowling lanes, billiard tables, a bar and a restaurant, and hosts live music once a month.



Information

Elge Interactive (☎03 85 86 13 07; 6 Grande Rue Chauchien; per hr €4; ☀generally 10.30am-noon & 2-6.30pm Mon-Fri) Internet access.

Tourist office (☎03 85 86 80 38; www.autun-tourisme.com; 13 rue du Général Demetz; ☀9am-1pm & 2-7pm, closed Mon morning & Sun Oct-mid-May) Sells a self-guided walking-tour brochure (€2) and hiking maps. Information on the Parc Naturel Régional du Morvan.



Getting There & Away

BUS Timetables are posted at the bus shelters next to the train station. **Buscéphale** (☎08 00 07 17 10; www.buscéphale.fr) serves Le Creusot and Le Creusot TGV station (Line 5; €1.50, one hour, three daily).

CAR For car hire, try **ADA** (☎03 85 86 37 36; 8 av de la République).

TRAIN The **train station** (av de la République) is on a slow tertiary line that requires a change of train to get almost anywhere except Auxerre (€28, 3½ hours, one daily) and Avallon (€18, two hours, two daily).

Château de Sully

This Renaissance-style **château** (☎03 85 82 09 86; www.chateaudesully.com, in French; adult/child €7.50/6, gardens only €3.50/2.80; ☀10.30am-4.30pm Apr-11 Nov), on the outskirts of the village of Sully (15km north-east of Autun along the D973), has a beautifully furnished interior and a lovely English-style garden. It was the birthplace of Marshall MacMahon, Duke of Magenta and president of France from 1873 to 1879, whose ancestors fled Ireland several centuries ago and whose descendants still occupy the property.

South of Autun

Thanks to nearby coal deposits and cheap transport via the **Canal du Centre** (1793), Le Creusot (population 24,350) became a major steel-making centre during the 19th century. The story of the Schneider steelworks, which at one time employed 15,000 workers, is told at **Château de la**

Verrerie (☎03 85 73 92 00; adult/child/family €6/3.80/15.25; ☉10am-noon & 2-6pm Mon & Wed-Fri, 2-6pm Sat & Sun), a late 18th-century glassworks turned into a private mansion. Its **Musée de l'Homme et de l'Industrie** and **Académie François Bourdon** have models of locomotives, bridges, ships and nuclear powerplants.

The **Côte Chalonnaise** winegrowing area is just south of the Côte de Beaune-drums from Chagny south to St-Gengoux-le-National.

Tournus (www.tourneuois.fr), on the Saône, is known for its 10th- to 12th-century Romanesque abbey church, **Abbatiale St-Philibert** (☉8.30am-7pm), whose superb and extremely rare 12th-century **mosaic** of the calendar and the zodiac was discovered by chance in 2002.

The scenic roads that link Tournus with Cluny, including the D14, D15, D82 and D56, pass through lots of tiny villages, many with charming churches. The medieval village of **Brancion** sits at the base of its château, while **Chardonnay** is, as one would expect, surrounded by vineyards. There's a panoramic view from 579m **Mont St-Romain**.

Cormatin, 14km north of Cluny, is home to the Renaissance-style **Château de Cormatin** (☎03 85 50 16 55; adult/child €9/4; ☉10am-noon & 2-6.30pm, no midday closure mid-Jul-mid-Aug, gardens open till dusk), renowned for its opulent 17th-century, Louis XIII-style interiors and formal gardens.

WORTH A TRIP

CALLING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Musée Nicéphore Niépce (☎03 85 48 41 98; www.museeniepce.com, in French; 28 quai des Messageries, Chalon-sur-Saône; admission free; ☉9.30-11.45am & 2-5.45pm Wed-Mon), named after Chalon-sur-Saône native Joseph Niépce (1765-1833) who is credited with inventing photography in 1816, is chock-full of all things photographic. Peruse thousands of devices and images from the creation of photography through daguerreotypes (Niépce collaborated with Daguerre), calotypes and on up to the modern digital era. Niépce is also credited with inventing an early bicycle-moped and an internal combustion engine.

Cluny

POP 4872

The remains of Cluny's great abbey – Christendom's largest church until the construction of St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican – are fragmentary and scattered, barely discernible among the houses and green spaces of the modern-day town. But with a bit of imagination, it's possible to picture how things looked in the 12th century, when Cluny's Benedictine abbey, renowned for its wealth and power and answerable only to the Pope, held sway over 1100 priories and monasteries stretching from Poland to Portugal.

👁 Sights

Église Abbatiale

LANDMARK CHURCH

(Abbey Church; ☎03 85 59 12 79; adult/child €7/free; ☉9.30am-6.10pm) Cluny's vast abbey church, built between 1088 and 1130, once stretched from the rectangular **map table** in front of the Musée d'Art et d'Archéologie all the way to the trees near the octagonal **Clocher de l'Eau Bénite** (Tower of the Holy Water) and its neighbour, the square **Tour de l'Horloge** – a distance of 187m!

Buy tickets and begin your visit at the **Musée d'Art et d'Archéologie**. Displays include a model of the Cluny complex, a 10-minute computer-generated 3-D 'virtual tour' of the abbey as it looked in the Middle Ages and some superb Romanesque carvings. It continues on the grounds of the **École Nationale Supérieure d'Arts et Métiers** (ENSAM; place du 11 Août; ☉same as Église Abbatiale), an institute for training mechanical and industrial engineers that's centred on an 18th-century cloister. You can wander around the grounds at midday and for an hour after the museum closes. Free guided tours in English occur in July and August.

The best place to appreciate the abbey's vastness is from the top of the **Tour des Fromages** (adult/child €2/free; ☉same as tourist office), once used to ripen cheeses. Access the tower's 120 steps through the tourist office.

Haras National

HORSE STUD

(National Stud Farm; ☎06 22 94 52 69; www.haras-nationaux.fr, in French; 2 rue Porte des Prés; adult/child €5/3; ☉tours 2pm, 3.30pm & 5pm Tue-Sun) Founded by Napoléon in 1806, the Haras National houses some of France's finest thoroughbreds, ponies and draught horses. Visit on a guided tour.

Cluny

Top Sights

- Église Abbatiale.....B2
Haras National.....B2

Sights

- 1 Clocher de l'Eau Bénite.....C2
2 École Nationale Supérieure d'Arts
et Métiers (ENSAM).....B3
3 Église Notre Dame.....A3
4 Église St-Marcel.....D5
5 Map Table.....A2
6 Musée d'Art et d'Archéologie.....A2
Tour de l'Horloge.....(see 1)
7 Tour des Fromages.....A3

Sleeping

- 8 Hôtel de Bourgogne.....B2
9 Hôtel du Commerce.....C4
10 Le Clos de l'Abbaye.....A2

Eating

- 11 Germain.....B4
12 Le Bistrot.....C4
13 Petit Casino Supermarket.....B3

constructed inside the abbey. Rooms have wrought iron beds with plump mattresses, and some have views of the abbey.

Hôtel de Bourgogne

HISTORIC HOTEL €€

(☎03 85 59 00 58; www.hotel-cluny.com; place de l'Abbaye; d €89-130, apt €159; ☹Feb-Nov; ♿♿♿) Cluny's ritziest hotel sits right next to the remains of the abbey. Built in 1817, it has a casual lounge area, 13 antique-furnished rooms and three spacious apartments.

Hôtel du Commerce

HOTEL €

(☎03 85 59 03 09; www.hotelducommerce-cluny.com; in French; 8 place du Commerce; s/d €29/44; ☹reception closed noon-4.30pm) A family-run budget hotel with peach-coloured hallways and 17 tidy rooms. Clean and basic.



Eating

The Hôtel de Bourgogne also has a fine restaurant.

Le Bistrot

BISTRO €

(☎03 85 59 08 07; 14 place du Commerce; menu €12.50; ☹8.30am-1am Wed-Mon) Cool vintage posters jazz up this cheery bistro where old-timers sip bubbly at the bar and families dip into pesto ravioli (€9) out the front.

Germain

TEA HOUSE €

(☎03 85 59 11 21; 25 rue Lamartine; ☹7am-8pm) A mouth-watering *pâtisserie*-

chocolaterie whose adjacent *salon de thé* (lunch menu €11.50) serves breakfast and light lunches like quiche and salad.

Petit Casino

SUPERMARKET €

(29 rue Lamartine; ☹8am-12.30pm & 3-7.30pm Tue-Sat, 8.30am-noon Sun)

Information

Cyber Espace (☎03 85 59 25 36; Portes d'Honneur; per hr €3; ☹10am-noon & 2-7pm Tue, Wed, Fri & Sat, 2-7pm Thu) Get online here or at the tourist office.

Tourist office (☎03 85 59 05 34; www.cluny-tourisme.com; 6 rue Mercière; internet per 15min €1.50; ☹10am-12.30pm & 2.30-6.45pm, no midday closure Jul & Aug, closed Sun Apr & Sep, Sun & Mon Oct-Mar)

Getting There & Around

BUS The bus stop on rue Porte de Paris is served by **Buscéphale** (☎03 85 39 93 40; www.cg71.fr, in French; tickets €1.50). Lines 7 and 9 (six or seven daily) go to Mâcon (45 minutes), the Mâcon-Loché TGV station (30 minutes) and Cormatin (20 minutes). Schedules are posted at the bus stop and tourist office.

BICYCLE Ludisport (☎06 62 36 09 58; www.ludisport.com; per half-/full day €12/20; ☹10am-noon & 2-4pm Feb-Nov) is at the old train station, about 1km south of the centre.

Mâcon

POP 35,040

The town of Mâcon, 70km north of Lyon on the west bank of the Saône, is at the heart of the **Mâconnais**, Burgundy's southernmost winegrowing area, which produces mainly dry whites. Mâcon's main commercial streets are rue Carnot and rue Dombey, a block west of the river, and perpendicular rue Sigorgne.

Across the street from the 18th-century town hall, the **tourist office** (☎03 85 21 07 07; www.macon-tourism.com; 1 place St-Pierre; ☹9.30am-12.30pm & 2-6.30pm Mon-Sat, closed Mon Nov-Apr), and its riverfront **annexe** (esplanade Lamartine; ☹10am-1.30pm & 3-7pm Jul-Sep) have information on accommodation and visiting vineyards including the **Beaujolais**.

The all-wood **Maison de Bois**, facing 95 rue Dombey and built around 1500, is decorated with carved wooden figures, some of them very cheeky indeed.

Musée Lamartine (☎03 85 38 96 19; 41 rue Sigorgne; adult/child €2.50/free; ☹10am-noon &

CYCLING THE VOIE VERTE

An old railway line and parts of a former canal towpath have been turned into the **Voie Verte** (Green Road), a series of paved paths around the Saône-et-Loire *département* that have been designed for walking, cycling and in-line skating. From Cluny, the Voie Verte heads north, via vineyards and valleys, to Givry (42km) and Santenay, where you can pick up the **Voie des Vignes** (p403) to Beaune. Tourist offices have the free cycling map, *Voies Vertes et Cyclotourisme – Bourgogne du Sud*.

2-6pm Tue-Sat, 2-6pm Sun & Mon) explores the life and times of the Mâcon-born Romantic poet and left-wing politician Alphonse de Lamartine (1790–1869).

Musée des Ursulines (☎03 85 39 90 38; 5 rue des Ursulines; adult/child €2.50/free; ☀10am-noon & 2-6pm Tue-Sat, 2-6pm Sun & Mon), housed in a 17th-century Ursuline convent, features Gallo-Roman archaeology, 16th- to 20th-century paintings and displays about 19th-century Mâconnais life.

The fin de siècle grandeur of the **Hôtel d'Europe et d'Angleterre** (☎03 85 38 27 94; www.hotel-europeangleterre-macon.com; 92-109 quai Jean Jaurès; d €60-70; ☀reception closed noon-2pm) has faded since Queen Victoria is said to have stayed here, but some of its basic rooms have river views.

L'Ethym' Sel (☎03 85 39 48 84; 10 rue Gambetta; menus €16-32; ☀lunch Thu-Tue, dinner Mon & Thu-Sat), two blocks south of the tourist office, is a modern bistro whose French and Burgundian specialties include locally raised Charolais steak.

About 10km west of Mâcon in the wine country, the **Musée de Préhistoire de Solutr ** (☎03 85 35 85 24; adult/child €3.50/free ☀10am-6pm, closed Dec) displays finds from one of Europe's richest prehistoric sites, occupied from 35,000 to 10,000 BC. A lovely 20-minute walk will get you to the top of the rocky outcrop known as the **Roche de Solutr **, from where Mont Blanc can sometimes be seen, especially at sunset.

Busc phale (☎03 85 39 93 40; www.cg71.fr, in French; tickets €1.50) bus lines 7 and 9 serve Cluny. The Mâcon-Ville **train station** is on the main line (18 daily) linking Dijon (€25, 1¼ hours), Beaune (€18, 50 minutes) and Lyon-Part Dieu (€16, 50 minutes). The Mâcon-Loch  TGV station is 5km south-west of town.

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